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R A T I O N A L E

U P O N

Some Texts of Scripture.



By ROBERT WAKE, M. A.
*Vicar of Fritwell in Oxfordshire ; and some-
time Fellow of Trinity-College, Oxon.*

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REATIONALE

UPON



By Robert W. M. A.

Printed at the University of Oxford, in the
University of Oxford, in the

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Printed at the University of Oxford, in the
University of Oxford, in the

T O

Henry Wake *aliàs* Jones, *Esq;*

Dear Nephew,

YOU ought to pardon me the Boldness in prefixing your Name here; and you would, did you consider that the Natural Affection I have to your Person makes me forget my self, whilst I make one Virtue to shuffle out another, by suffering my Duty of Love to encroach upon that of my Modesty. But the greatest Inducement I have to beg your Patronage, is, rather to make me keep within the bounds

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of

The Epistle Dedicatory.

of Civility than any thing else; lest by a rude and over-rated Supplication, I act the Sycophant more than the Suppliant, as the manner of some is. But whilst I remember I write to you, I think the Complements which are usually heap'd upon Patrons, ought to be forborn here; for Freedom, not Flattery, speaks the Endearment of Relations. I don't know what Judgment your tender Years may afford; but this I hope, that if there be any thing worth your notice in these Discourses, you will, in your Riper Thoughts be fair and candid. However mean I may possibly appear, I shall shelter my self under this common, though slender Umbrage, viz. I meant well, or at least I meant no hurt, by setting Hand to Paper; and if these Things, which I have penn'd at my Vacant Hours,

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Hours, may bring the least benefit to you or any one else, it is the utmost that I can expect; who am,

S I R,

Your Affectionate

and Humble Servant,

ROBERT WAKE.

The Epistle Dedicatory.
Hence, may bring the least bene-
fit to you or any one else, it is
the earnest that I can expect; who

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The Affirmation
of the Church

ROBERT WAKE

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T H E

P R E F A C E.

I *may not be amiss to anticipate my Reader so far, as to desire him to view this Piece with some fair Construction and Candor, and not with any Evil Eye. But to judge Precipitantly, or Maliciously, is so mean a thing, as well as common, that no one can blame me for mentioning it, and endeavouring to stave off the Censorious as well as I can. If a Blow can't be wholly avoided, we must deaden the stroke by meeting it. But when all is said, this censorious way of Criticizing is as sottish as disingenuous, and savours nothing of Conscience, Honour, or indeed common Civility. I'll own, this rude way is commonly practis'd; but then 'tis thought it is by those men only who have scarce Brains or Breeding to know any better. I should hardly have dream'd of fore-stalling my Reader thus, did not I experience this Truth in others; and that people are now govern'd more by Parties*

The P R E F A C E.

ties and Factions, than the true Principles of Reason and Religion. But however it be my Fate to suffer by the Tongues of some men, I hope I'm not so cursedly ridiculous, but that I may have some Plea for what I have done. I don't overmuch beg for Patronage here, for I hope there's no great occasion: For Cringing and Fawning (I thank God) was never my Talent. What therefore I have writ has been with Plainness and Sincerity, and that shall be my Comfort, let what will be the Event of thus my appearing in Publick. I have endeavour'd to speak the Truth with all the Simplicity that I could, where it was absolutely necessary; provided I did not transgress the Rules of Modesty or Civility, in any scurrilous, filthy way. I love to render to every one his due; and since I reflect upon the Person of none, I may and will tell him his own in general terms. For I don't think we are always bound to be in the strain with old Eli with his lewd Sons, when we would animadvert upon Villains. As, Why do ye such things? For I hear of your evil dealings by all this people. Nay, my sons, for it is no good report that I hear, ye make the Lord's people to transgress, 1 Sam. 2. 23, 24. This sort of reprehending his vile Sons, was but weak, and consequently blame-worthy in Eli, who

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who was a Magistrate as well as a Priest. He ought to have given 'em his Reprimand with Rigour and Severity, and have shewed his Coercive Power, as well as that of his Priestly Admonition. But whether a Man be a Magistrate, or a Priest, or both, or neither, it's his business, if he'll brow-beat the Lewd and Profane, to strike more home to their Persons, and tell 'em their own to some effect, and not in the puny Language of Why do ye so, my Brethren, why do ye so? I wonder what Eli would have said to the Money-Changers, and those who bought and sold Doves in the Temple, had he been in our Saviour's place. It's odds but his Voice would have been as weak and ineffectual here as it was yonder, and he would have told the Money-Merchants and Dove-sellers, that they did not do well to be there, and to practise such things in the Temple; and he would, in the upshot perhaps, have desired 'em to go out of the Holy Place. But he who was Meekness it self, as well as Charity in the highest, shew'd his Authority in a quite different manner: For we read he overthrew their Tables, and said to the Trapezites, That they had made of his house of Prayer a den of thieves. Had not the Words been in holy Scripture, they might have been thought by some, especially
our

The PREFACE.

our Meal-mouth'd Cowards now-a-days, who are so much for mincing and moderating every thing they should not, to have savour'd of Scurrility. But I would fain know of these timorous (I had almost said Time-serving) Men, what they mean. Do they think themselves Samples for all the World besides ? and that the best way to Reform it, is for every one to sculk and hide his head (as they do) when daring men bid defiance to God and Man, and threaten Subversion of Church and State ? If this or that Action be Villany, may not I say (without any derogation to Christianity) that he who commits it is a Villain ? Certainly I may ; and if I may, I shall not be afraid to say so, let cunning, double-minded (healing-men some call 'em) say or think what they please. I can safely say, and without breach of Modesty, that a Parricide, a Polygamist, a Sodomite, a Perjur'd Man, an Heretick, are all Villains in their Kind, and ought not to be tolerated in a Christian Government. I'll say (as Solomon has taught me) that by the means of a whorish woman, a man is brought to a piece of bread ; and that Poverty is but the natural effect of Whoring, in defiance of any Whoremonger in the World, let him carry his head never so high, and however he may be dignified or distinguish'd. I may
say,

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say, without being scurrilous or sawcy either, that Whoring is of a deadly consequence; for it not only tends to the Ruin of the Individual, but of whole Families and Kingdoms too. For I am afraid if all the Families now in being, which have been ruin'd by Whoring, were to be muster'd up, they would make a long and dismal Catalogue. Let the Adulterer and Fornicator laugh if they please; yet let 'em have a care that at length this be not their doom, viz. Upon account of their Beggary to be despis'd here, and upon account of their Sin, to be hereafter excluded the Kingdom of Heaven. And so for any other Vice whatsoever. We ought to set it forth in its true, full and proper Colours, as near as we can; the odious Complexion of each Sin, and the evil Effects which do attend it; that every one may love himself so far as to hate that which is so dismal in the Event. But my vindicating my self from being scurrilous, may make some think that I am really so, or I need not Apologize after this manner. Let Men think as they please, for I value them not; only this I shall say, that let any one consult the daring Impiety of the Age, when he is pleased to peruse these Discourses, and perhaps he may find there needs no great Apology for what I have writ, or for my way of writing. If I have writ
amiss,

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amiss, I my self am to answer for't, and no one else. Had I writ out of Prejudice, or Interest, or purely to get my Bread, no wonder if my Pen had run counter to my Thoughts. But since I have not; but on the contrary, have endeavour'd to shew my self with Impartiality, I should think this Piece should find some Reception, notwithstanding the sceptical and abusive humour of these Times. Had I been controversial upon any Point, I doubt not but the Bees would have been buzzing; and it would have been well if they had not stung me too. Had I undertook some grand Concern either of Church or State, and had been an Enemy to either in a fallacious, argumentative way, no wonder if I had provok'd the Learned to dip their Pens against me, and expose me to the World. Or had I Lampoon'd and Libel'd the Government, I might have expected to have been as severely lash'd by some cleaner hands; and if I had been as severely punish'd too, I had had but my due. Was I eminent for my Learning, and had exerted my self in a glorious way, some perhaps even then, out of Envy or Ill-will, would have struck at me. If I through a long and elaborate Course of History and Philosophy, will shew my Power and Abilities in some great thing against a Party or Sect of Men, I'm sure to be pelted
at

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at by some Enemy or other, though I'm never so strongly back'd with Argument, Truth and a good Cause. But since these Discourses of mine are plain and simple, and without being embellish'd with the wisdom of Philosophy, the depth of History, and the enchantments of Oratory, and the like, no wonder they pass without an Enemy, as being inconsiderable. For I'm not so vain as to imagine any great matter to be in what I present to publick view; lest I be too near of Kin to the poor Fly in the Fable, upon the Coach-Wheel; What a dust do I raise, says the little Animal! Any one I thing may easily draw the Moral. Therefore, whether or no I may pretend to set up for Somebody, I shall not determine here; but yet so far I shall and will assume to myself, viz. That since we have Liberty of the Press as well as that of Conscience, I think I may publish as well as another. But however I may appear, I thank God no one can charge me with Theft. I'm no Plagiary, neither do I strut in borrow'd Feathers; so that if any Shame or Ignominy do arise from what I have writ, it's all my own. I'll acknowledge my self little; therefore the Critick need not shew himself overmuch; and if there is any room for him to shew his Generosity, let him, or else he is Unworthy.

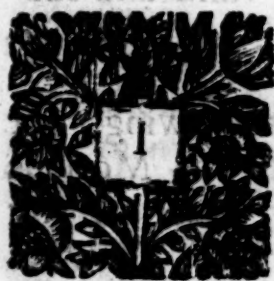
ADVERTISEMENT.

WHatsoever Mistakes of the Press do occur in this Book, the Reader for his Satisfaction may rectify, if he will be pleased to have Recourse to these Errata following; viz.

Page 14 Line 3. for Religious, read Religious. p. 20.
 l. 15. r. hardships. p. 29. l. 19. r. a get ye. p. 31. l. 2.
 r. Tormentors. p. 42. l. 22. dele we. p. 43. l. 26. r. Hearrs.
 p. 76 l. 29. r. impulse and immane. p. 77. l. 5. r. deign'd.
 p. 88. l. 11. r. ting'd. p. 93. l. 8. r. intolerably. & l. 22.
 r. devilish. p. 98. l. 1. add, First, That it's presumptuous
 and absurd, to think of reforming others, without a due
 inspecting our selves. p. 100. l. 3. r. Neighbour by way.
 p. 111. l. 28. dele to be. p. 112. l. 18. r. fascinating. p. 113.
 l. 6. r. fancied. p. 127. l. 13. r. poignancy. p. 143. l. 27.
 r. that. p. 150. l. 7. r. the Encouragement. p. 155. l. 15.
 r. would. p. 159. l. 3. r. disguise. p. 163. l. 21. r. preserve.
 p. 167. l. 21. r. Atheist. p. 168. l. 26. r. endeavouring.
 p. 172. l. 25. r. we can all. p. 174. l. 2. r. should. p. 182.
 l. 8. r. coming. p. 193. l. 21. r. wiles. and l. 25. r. flatter-
 ing. p. 198. l. 17. r. fugeret. and l. 25. r. the L. Florus.
 p. 199. l. 29. r. par. and l. 30. r. queque. p. 202. l. 5. after
 case, add, Examples sufficient to convince us of our duty.
 p. 204 l. 29. add may. p. 220. l. 11. r. mostly. and l. 28.
 r. exdianw. l. 29. r. dlanw. p. 237. l. 29. r. preceding.
 p. 243. l. 2. add it is. p. 244. l. 12. r. whom. p. 256. l. 29.
 r. Misdemeanour. p. 257. l. 1. r. would.

1 COR. XV. 58.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.



IN this Chapter we have St. Paul speaking to the *Corinthians*, of the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour; and from our Saviour's Resurrection demonstrates ours, together with the benefit and manner thereof. And by reason that this is the chief, and indeed the completion of all Gospel-Truths, and one of the most dangerous consequences to be doubted of, because on this Point stands the whole Substance of our Redemption, the All of Christianity, (for

B if

if we believe not this one Article, *viz.* the Resurrection of our Saviour, we had e'en as well believe nothing of Christianity); therefore the Apostle, with his moving Rhetorick, and dear Affection, bespeaketh them; that by so mild and obliging a Compellation he might the better insinuate himself into their Affections whom he is to persuade. And after all his most powerful Arguments, he concludes this his excellent Discourse by way of Admonition. As much as if he had said, If these things are so as I have laid down to you in these my Premises, I think my Conclusion is valid and substantial, *Therefore, I say, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, &c.*

The Proposal of Reward wings our Endeavours, and enlivens our Motions towards the compassing even of any Worldly Concern. Hardships, Troubles and Dangers shall be over-look'd, upon the prospect of being recompenc'd for our Labour and Travel. This spurs us on to any difficulties and hazards, and by it we easily and chearfully surmount our Toil. And this is true: For otherwise why should the Student undergo those mighty Labours of the Brain, did not the solid Satisfaction of getting Wisdom,

dom, push him on to be thus laborious? Though the Wise Man says *Wisdom does occasion grief, and he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow*; yet notwithstanding, Wisdom is a pleasant thing, and worth the getting, or else *Solomon* is false in his Lectures, and contradicts himself; for he pronounceth that man happy *that findeth wisdom*; and tells us, that *fools despise wisdom*; and *a man is commended according to his wisdom*; and many more Texts might be cited out of his Morals, to confirm the Excellency of it, which would be needless at present to enumerate. Therefore though Wisdom costs us many a Pang in the search after her, though she is not to be found without many painful Endeavours in the Search, yet let this be our Comfort still: She pays the Labourer his full Wages; and though not with Silver, or Gold, or Rubies, yet with somewhat beyond these; for these are nothing in the Balance, compar'd to the great and solid Enjoyments of the Mind, elevated and rectified by Wisdom. But let us descend lower, and we shall find that a man will take true pains in order for smaller advantages. The Plough-man would not Till and Sow his Ground, did he not ex-

pect a Crop with increase. The Merchant would not struggle with Winds and Waves, did he not hope for an advantageous Voyage. The Mechanick would throw away his Tools, did he think his Labour should be in vain. The Sluggard would then cease to be a Fool for folding up his hands in his bosom, but rather he would be pronounc'd one who should labour, was there no product to come on't. But since thriving, and plenty, and satisfaction, and indeed all the Comforts of this Life are owing to Labour, no wonder we find men to stirring and indefatigable. If then the Expectation of some Temporal Emolument shall command our Endeavours, why should not Religion bear as good a sway with us? For Religion mostly gives us an Happiness in hand; it points out to us the best Enjoyments even of this Life; and in this sense we may say, *Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord*, Psal. 112. 1. But since Religion doth not always come attended with worldly Prosperity, the Religious man must have a firmer Basis, whereupon he may ground his Happiness, or he'll mistake his Aim. For though the Righteous do sometimes enjoy the good things of this World, as
some

some Antepast of their Happiness hereafter; yet since this is no universal, standing Rule, no man must lean upon it, neither is it any Standard to guide him by. For was it so, then none but the Righteous could flourish here. But this we find contrary to Holy Scripture, as well as our own Experience; and *David's Complaint* in his 73^d *Psalms*, is verified in these our days, for the ungodly do prosper in the world, whenas the Righteous are plagued and persecuted. So that here can be no Rule whereby we may deduce any certain and direct consequence to square our Actions by, of any thing which happens in this World: And since 'tis said in Holy Writ, *There is one event to the righteous and to the wicked*, we ought to acquiesce in God's Providence, and not be too prying into his Unsearchable Wisdom. *David* himself, though a Prophet, and in a peculiar manner *a man after God's own heart*, (upon which one would be tempted to think he might have been acquainted with God's Dispensations) yet in this very *Psalms* we find him at a mighty stand, and seemingly to hesitate in his Judgment, as concerning these ungodly Folk, they were such a Riddle to him; nay, in

vers. 15. he confesseth he did not understand the ways of God's Providence in reference to these men; till we read *vers.* 16. That he went into the Sanctuary of God; then, says he, *I understood the end of these men*: That is, with Humility he consulted God, and God communicated this Secret unto *David*, and he became sensible of their dismal Turn. In short, whether the Righteous flourish here or not, it's all one to us, we must commit our selves to God, and be *always abounding in the work of the Lord*, and then our Reward shall be certain and satisfactory in the other World, whatever befalls us in this.

This then being the drift of the Words of my Text, the Reward which the Religious man is to rely upon, must be that in prospect, *viz.* Eternal. This should stir us up to a vigorous and lively Faith, and prevent all suggestions to the contrary. For Faith well rooted and grounded is able to baffle the whole World with all its Allurements. The Devil with his *All this will I give thee*, can't divert us from our resolute course of Religion. For we shall be apt to reflect, That could we, by renouncing our Faith, enjoy all the advantages which this Life affords, the

event would be this, Our Satisfaction in the main would be but vain and momentary, but our Punishment for thus transgressing our Duty, implacable and eternal.

A reasonable man will imagine this as argument sufficient for Stedfastness of Faith. This will command his utmost care, to be firm and true to the Principles of Religion. Let his outward Troubles and Afflictions, let his outward Splendor and Prosperity be what they will, he will be apt to overlook them, as being inconsiderable in respect of that Misery or Happiness which must be his Portion hereafter. *Your labour is not in vain in the Lord*, says our Apostle; that is, ye shall assuredly and sufficiently be rewarded by the Lord. For the Expression, tho it runs indefinitely, and carries in it no determinate Extent; yet it virtually includes, and in its full Latitude denotes not only a Reward simply so speaking, but eminently so. For though in terms no Reward be mention'd in this Conclusion of Discourse, yet in Drift and Scope, and from the whole Substance of it preceding, the Apostle doth all along demonstrate to his *Corinthians* the Benefits which did accrue to 'em

from Christ's Resurrection. For (says he, *vers.* 19. of this Chapter) *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most miserable.* The reason was evident to him; for he knew what hard usages and fiery trials he was to undergo for the sake of Christ; and consequently, had he measur'd his Happiness by the things of this Life, he had mistook his Aim in the pursuit of it. For Christ his Pattern shew'd him a quite different way from that of the World; a way that to flesh and blood seem'd rugged and unpleasant, though through the mighty Influences of the Holy Ghost it should become easy and delectable. And that which must make it so to us, must be a stedfast looking at the things not seen. Now this Prospect will enable us to pass the Storms of this transitory World with more Patience and Resignation, and the Prosperities of it with less Pride and Passion than generally we do. For whether it be Happiness or Misery that toucheth our Thoughts, let us but consider it as Eternal, and I think the consideration will condense us into a sober sense of our selves. Yet notwithstanding all the fair Proposals we have to be stedfastly Religious, we foolishly reject

ject 'em, and turn a deaf ear to any thing that calls us to duty. Let what will be aim'd for our Spiritual advantage, we spurn and kick at it, as if we had a mind to shew the World we are as much in love with our own Ruin, as we are the Causes of it. We don't care to fix a Thought beyond the Grave; our Minds are so strongly knit to these things below, as if all our Happiness terminated on this Life. Instead of resolving to be religious, our Resolution runs quite counter. Nothing must persuade us but our own lying Oracles, our unruly Lusts. What they suggest to us, presently commenceth Law. These we mightily hug and caress, these we strangely obey; whereas the Dictates of Reason, and the Word of God shall be had of no account by us. We are so far from being steadfast and unmoveable in our Christian Faith, that any thing ruffles and discomposes us. 'Tis true, God shall be obeyed and his Laws observ'd, provided they don't clash with our Worldly Concerns. But let 'em once come in competition with these, and we shall quickly dare to contradict the Apostle, and not be such *Fools for Christ's sake*. To know Christ by suffering for him, would be a stumbling-

bling-block in our way, and an affront to our Reason, which we will have wholly to govern us in all the Concerns of Religion. Let the World take up our Thoughts, and it is not a *St. Paul* that shall reduce us. Christ crucified may be preach'd, and his Doctrine deign'd our Ears, but let it thwart our Interests, and we shall soon disown its power by violating its Laws. Let Christianity be always attended with carnal advantages, and we shall readily pronounce, *Godliness great gain*; but let it be destitute of these, and I think our Zeal will not keep us warm. *Acts 19*. We find *Demetrius* opposing the Apostle, and the reason was, his Interest lay at stake. Had he not been Smith to the Goddess, perhaps the Tumult and Uproar had not been; but so besotted was his mind with the thoughts of worldly Pelf, and of being wealthy by making Shrines, that there was no room for Religion. All his Religion was sunk into his Trade, and upon that account, *Great was Diana of the Ephesians*.

From the Words of my Text I shall consider Three things chiefly.

1. What

1. What is meant by *Be ye stedfast, unmoveable*, as it respects matter of Faith.

2. What is meant by *always abounding in the work of the Lord*, as it relates to Practice.

3. And lastly, The Reason for all this, *viz. The Reward implied ; Forasmuch as ye know that your Labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

1. Then, What is meant by *Be ye stedfast, unmoveable*, as it respects matter of Faith.

I take Stedfastness of Faith to be a thing of the most weighty moment in the whole business of Christianity. Christianity is nothing without it. It can't stand its ground against the Devil, the World and the Flesh, unless supported by it. 'Tis this which maintains it in all varieties and changes of Affairs. 'Tis this which makes a man carry an equal mind in all turns of Fortune, whether Prosperous or Adverse. If the man be in Prosperity, and doth in an extraordinary manner enjoy in this Life his good Things, why then this points out to him the end for which they were given him. It warns him to use 'em with Moderation
and

and Calmness, not with Keeness and Passion; with Chearfulness and Humility, not with Pride and Morosity; with Submission and Contentedness, not with Greediness and Fondness; with Strangeness and Indifferency, not with Eagerness and Dotage. For as a Stedfast Faith on the one hand shall keep him right, even, and fixt to his Principles, though his outward State be never so glorious or dismal; so on the other hand, the want of this Grace shall make him deviate or start aside upon any little turn of Condition whatsoever. For Prosperity and Adversity are dangerous things, and require a nice Head, as well as a sound Heart, to to be carried through all the stages and periods of this Life with a Christian Decorum. By many ways a man may be easily rifled and spoil'd by 'em, unless a true sense of Religion to Ballance 'em, make him proof against their Blandishments and Terrors. *Ex. Gr.* Pride shall utterly disable a man from bearing a prosperous or adverse State with an even hand, though Humility shall so lessen either Condition, as that he shall bear 'em with Calmness and Content. But we must stand upon our guard against the violence of either. Of this *Agur* rightly

rightly admonisheth us. Do but observe his Modesty of Request, and in that his Humility too, *Prov. 30. 8, 9.* wherein the good man desires one special, and indeed remarkable Boon of God, *viz.* That he would be pleased to give him neither poverty nor riches, but that he would feed him with food convenient. *Lest I be full* (says he) *and deny thee, and say, who is the Lord? or lest I be poor and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.* The words do import *Agur's* acknowledgment of his weakness in point of religious Duty, when Extremity should urge him to transgress; and indeed they ought to remind us all of the same impotency. For though we are apt to promise to our selves a good security from any Vice of this Nature, yet we must have a care of being presumptuous; for by our presumption we tempt God to abandon us to our selves; and then will Pride quickly lead us on, *Pharisee* like, to confide in our Ability, and in all likelihood by this means we shall so far Transcribe his Copy as to be in the same Form with him, who for his awkward Sanctity was condemn'd as Hypocrite. Pride is a sin which is strangely fascinating and beguiling, and will never let us
fasten

fasten upon the Principles of Religion. It is inconsistent with 'em. Stedfastness in Religious Duties is a peculiar Grace of God, given to the Sons of men as a Convoy to conduct 'em safe through the storms and dangers of this World. But God denies the Favour of this his Grace to the Proud; for 'tis said he *resisteth* them, though he gives it to the Humble: To expect Stedfastness of Faith in a Proud Man, would be as absurd, as to expect a plentiful Crop from a barren Ground, whenas the barrenness of the Soil incapacitates it for such a Product. For take the Proud Man as forsaken of God (and forsaken he is since he is denied his Grace) and I would fain know what fruits of Righteousness, or true Holiness, we can in any reason hope from him. But that he should be Stedfastly Religious, this would be more strange still; for we know the *Psalmist* tells us, That the Ungodly through Pride *careth not for God, neither is God in all his thoughts*. Let us not then be so ridiculous as to fancy, that he who careth not for God, and banishes him out of his thoughts, can possibly be Stedfast in his Duty towards him. Pride is always the Bane of Christianity in any Fortune. He that is

Pro-

Prosperous and Proud, will upon any little Pet and Discontent, be tempted to deny his Maker, and be guilty of that presumption which poor *Agur* deprecated, viz. of asking, *who is the Lord?* If we consider adversity, we shall find the Proud Man in that too, to be as tottering as in that of Prosperity; Adversity is given us as a means to prove our Patience, Humility, Contentedness, Resignation, and the like; but these Virtues are no more consistent with Pride, than Truth is with a Contradiction. 'Tis true, we read that *David* before he was troubled, went astray, and that *it was good for him that he was afflicted*; that is, Adversity work'd it's end in the Holy *Psalmist*. If Prosperity had Elevated him too much, Afflictions were like weights upon his heels to keep him from mounting above his decent pitch. And this he does in effect confess, *Psal. 30. v. 6, 7, 8. And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be removed: Thou Lord, of thy goodness hadst made my hill so strong: Thou didst turn thy face from me, and I was troubled. Then cried I unto thee, O Lord, and gat me to my Lord right humbly.* These words do warn us not to pronounce too confidently of a prosperous State, or lean too much upon it. For we
find

find when the Royal *Psalmist* was deliver'd from *Saul*, and seated in his Throne, he thought nothing could disturb him ; but he soon found his Error : for God was no sooner pleas'd to withdraw himself a little, but new troubles came upon *David* ; and these troubles had a good Effect, they rais'd him to a pitch of Humility, and that Humility rais'd him to his Greatness again, for it reinstated him in his Throne. But speaking of the Holy *Psalmist*, we shall make this remark, viz. That through the whole course of *Psalms* we find a true Spirit of Humility in him. In *Psal.* 131. He confesseth he was *not high-minded*, *neither had he any proud looks* ; that he *did not exercise himself in matters too high for him*, but he kept his Soul low, even so low that he compar'd himself to a *weaned Child* : And consequently, adversity was Medicinal to him, though it has its contrary Effect upon others. For as in respect of things, in a natural Sense, we say that, *Quicquid recipitur, recipitur ad modum recipientis* ; so in a Moral Sense the Rule holds in respect of Persons. And though Adversity may be said to meliorate some, yet it obdurates others. And this the above-cited *Agur* seem'd to be aware

aware of: Otherwise why should he so earnestly have deprecated extream Poverty, but that he was afraid it would come attended with its usual concomitants, *viz. Stealing, and taking God's name in vain?*

But for some Proof of what I am speaking, *viz.* That a proud Man in any condition is unstedfast in the Principles of Religion, take one general instance of the *Israelites*. Upon what People did God send down his Blessings more than upon them? His Favours were so great and manifold towards them, that they Entit'led 'em *the chosen of God, God's peculiar people*. How many Miracles were wrought to signalize his Love towards 'em; and yet in the main, who more unthankful for Benefits receiv'd than they? But for an Exemplification of this, consult the *78th Psalm*, which sufficiently sets forth their Ingratitude to God, and distrust of his Providence, which forc'd the Royal *Psalmist* to pronounce 'em a faithless and stubborn Generation, and that started aside when they should most stedfastly have Cleaved to God. In the *106th Psalm* it's said, *They forgot God, and were disobedient at the Red Sea*, which one would think should have continued

in their Remembrance for the sake of the Miracle wrought there, and consequentially have confin'd 'em within the bounds of duty, especially that of Gratitude and Thankfulness. But we find it otherwise with them. We read indeed, when the stupendious Miracle of drying up the Red Sea was perform'd, and they walk'd through it, and their Enemies so Assailing were overwhelm'd by the Waters, and destroy'd upon the Attempt; then (it seems) they believed God, and gave him Praise. But their ugly temper of Murmuring and Blaspheming soon return'd upon 'em (I will not say as soon as the Red Sea to its pristine State) and they *forgot the works which God did, and would not abide his counsel.* And why would they not ? Why, the *Psalmist* tells us, v. 14. *lust came upon them, and they tempted God.* They tempted God ! that is, they provoked him with their abominable Ingratitude ; and that Ingratitude was the effect of their Pride ; and that Pride was the bottom of all their complaints. Had God sure plyed 'em never so fast with his Favours, Ingratitude would have quickly shewed them *Israelites.* God wrought sundry Miracles among 'em in *Ægypt*, yet there was one, which

which he, out of his Infinite Wisdom, was pleas'd to forbear, *viz.* That of changing their Hearts. He turn'd the Sea into dry Land, the Stony-Rock into a springing-well, their Dust into Lice, and the like, for their sakes; and by the same Omnipotent Power he might have work'd a Miracle upon their very Natures too. But his Wisdom and his Power is past finding out, though by *Jews* then, and *Christians* now they have been most blasphemously question'd. I shall remark this, and then apply. Look over the whole Book of God, and you shall find, that in whatsoever State the *Jews* were, they constantly had their Ebbings and Flowings in their religious returns to Almighty God; and though sometimes they fought him, yet they as often forsook him. God sent his Plagues among these *Jews* in order to reduce 'em, but all amounted to no more than this; they still remained Obstinate and rebellious, and would give no credence to his Word.

But to pass from *Jews* then, to *Christians* now. I am afraid People are as giddy and unsetled in the Principles of Religion now as ever. For otherwise, why should Heresies, and Schisms, and other

Blasphemies and Irregularities, thus disturb the World as they do? Why should People bandy themselves into so many different Parties, did not Pride push on some Self-conceited Ring-leading men to new-teach the World? How could new Sects so continually spring up as they do, did not a proud lying Spirit lead the way? Our Saviour indeed says, *Matt. 10. 34.* That he *came not to send peace upon earth, but a sword.* The Words were a prediction of Persecutions which should arise in the early times of Christianity; and upon the publishing and professing Christ's Doctrine, these hard shifts for a time should ensue; but to compleat the Prediction, the Hereticks, and Schismatics, the Blasphemous and Profane, have stamp'd a Perpetuity upon it. And there shall be no Peace, but continual Dissensions and Animosities; no Stedfastness in the Principles of Religion, but a proud, restless Spirit shall work its utmost to disturb Mankind.

It was this Proud Spirit that first dar'd to disturb Heaven it self; and since that, Earth's Inhabitants have groan'd under its Effects. Angels have been tainted with this proud factious Spirit; well then might the Holy Oracles of God
warn

warn poor Mortals to stand upon their Guard. For though Angels are Incapacitated to be led again into Perdition, yet man lies obnoxious still to be Seduc'd. The Devil has power to Tempt man, though man has a greater power to Resist him. Pride, like its first Author, will be sure to devour, unless the Holy Ghost, who alone can order the unruly Wills of sinful men, prevents its Operations, and so strengthens and confirms us in our Faith, as to make us Temptation-proof against the Tempter, the Evil one. For never was any one unsteady in his Faith, and led away to embrace an Error, but it was through the Instigation of the Devil, who will never want Artifice to circumvent us, unless resolutely resisted. Why then should not the Apostle warn us to be *stedfast, unmoveable*?

No Temptations from without, no Whispers from within, should decoy us so far as to make us renounce our Faith, which has been handed down from the Apostles to us without Spot and without Blemish. I have singled out this Sin of Pride, by reason that I take it to be the cause of those many sins which so notoriously darken our Reason, and debauch our Principles. I shall mention two Eminent

nent ones, *viz.* Heresy and Schism, which are the direct and immediate Effects of this damnable, Ring-leading Sin, as may be easily evinc'd both from Reason and Experience. Other sins I don't doubt may be strong enough to make us quit our hold; as Covetousness, Lust, Envy, Malice and Revenge; but I shall omit these here, and just glance upon the other two, *viz.* Heresy and Schism.

1. And first for Heresy. The wise man doth seem to arraign this Sin, *Prov.* 13. 10. where he says, *only by pride cometh contention*; that is, contention about Religious Affairs; for it is hatch'd and propagated by it. Though Contention mention'd in the Text may, in its latitude of Signification, comprehend other things as well as barely those of Religion; yet I conceive that the things of Religion are chiefly aim'd at by the words. And I presume the truth of this, the Church in all Ages of Christianity will Attest. From this very root, I am apt to think, have sprang up all the Heresies from Ancient days down to ours, and by this they are still nourish'd and propagated. Through this shall the Man of Reason (as the World Stiles him, or at least, as he modestly Stiles himself) scorn

scorn to stoop to Divine Revelation, or rely upon Matters of Faith. Whatsoever is beyond his Comprehension, is presently deem'd nonsense or impossible, and no Religious Secret is beyond the Ken of such profound Enquirers as he. By this Pride, Mysteries have been perty handled ; God has been blasphem'd thro' his Attributes ; and the *Credenda* of Christianity have been stript of their Glory. The Men of Reason can dive so far (forsooth !) into the Secrets of God, that nothing must skreen them and their knowledge. Whatsoever is really in its own Nature beyond any finite Understanding fully to comprehend, shall be cashier'd as an invention to Amuse Idiots with, and not Rever'd by them who are above the Foppery of an Implicit Faith. Though God and Antiquity have declar'd the incomprehensibility of these *Credenda*, and that they are heights above any Mortal reach, yet Pride tells 'em they comprehend 'em all. And these high Thoughts of themselves have prompted 'em to vent their strange and novel Doctrines to the scandal of even common Morality. By this means is our Christian Faith prostituted and trampled upon in order to exalt their Reason,

and the Holy Oracles of God traduc'd and corrupted on purpose to advance these men to their Affected Glory. Thus have Church and State been daily wounded by self-conceited Upstarts, who shall build themselves Monuments upon the ruines of 'em both, rather than they (poor Men!) be buried in Oblivion, and leave no name behind 'em to Posterity.

2. Let us 2^{ly}, consider Schism, and we shall find that Pride enlivens and foment it. Why doth any one, I wonder, separate from a Communion, but because he fancies himself wiser than the whole Body? Let him become a Leader, and it matters not who falls into the Ditch. To be called *Master, Master*, is to a popular self-opinion'd Person, mighty Bewitching and Enchanting; so Enchanting, that it has made the poor forlorn wretch forget the solid satisfaction of a Good Conscience, and the interest of another World. This pitiful, vain-glorious Humour doth so swell the Schismatick, that he shall wade through the foulest Blasphemies and Absurdities, rather than endure any acknowledgment of Error: And this has made him put on his disguise, which has been so finely laid, that
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even the Wise and Well-meaning have been sometimes Seduc'd by it. Holiness indeed has been the Pretence, when Mischief has been design'd ; and the *God I thank thee I am not as other men are*, has been but a false Alarm, and a fair Speech in order for greater Delusions. Many a poor Soul has been ruin'd through this spiritual Legerdemain ; and such I will call it. For *Religion that is pure and undefiled*, needs no Tricks or Quirks to put it off ; no false Glosses to dazzle the Eyes of the Vulgar. It doth not shun the Light, but is that Light which shall be sure to *shine before men*.

But Schism must have its dark side in order to Delude, or it will not be able to work the Devil's End. St. *Paul* lasheth these Schismatics in his 16th Chapt. to the *Romans*, where he says, *I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them. For they that are such, serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly ; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple*. An excellent Description of pragmatical, self-ended, insinuating Seducers ! in which the B. Apostle bids us *mark* or *observe* them ; Importing, that we should watch

watch these false Saints (not as they do others in order to abuse and vilify) but to avoid 'em as much as in us lies, lest we are unawares ensnared by their damnable Doctrine , who , under pretence of refining Religion, are sowing Discords and Divisions , and infecting the Church with Schism; and all this under the cloak of good Words and fair Speeches. We must avoid such Holy Cheats, as we would the man who has the Plague upon him, from whom we should be in danger of the Disease by too near an approach. Thus shall the Schismatick run the risque of his Soul for a little naked popularity, and the windy applause of some pitiful, factious Spirits.

But, *my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable.* There is nothing which more baffles the pretences of a false Religion, than a stedfast maintaining of the true. 'Twas this Stedfastness which gave the noble stamp of Heaven to the Holy, Wise and Couragious heretofore, and consecrated their Endeavours. Nothing, methinks, should more disparage a man, than to be of a wavering Mind, which, indeed, is to be nothing in regard of Religion. *Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong,* says
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the Apostle, 1 Cor. 16. 13. *Quit you like men!* That is, don't think that Christianity is an Enemy to Manhood; It is so far from it, that it advanceth the Man every way; and if Wisdom and Courage bespeak Manhood, I am sure the stedfast Christian has as good a Claim to it, as any one. But to be unsteady, tottering, and always shifting from this point to that, argues a weak Brain, as well as a false Heart; and any one that looks into the World will find by Experience, that the giddy, whiffling creatures of it are the constant prey of Cheats and Seducers. God condescending to take Human Nature upon him, did it to exalt the same, and not to debase it; and if so, a Christian imports no more than Man elevated in Condition, and raised to a more glorious pitch.

For Christianity is nothing else but Morality superstructed. It is *the fool* that has wished or *said in his heart, There is no God*; and he is no better who forsakes him upon occasion, and such is the Waverer. Nothing is more often inculcated into us through the whole Book of God, than Stedfastness or Perseverance. But it speaks very meanly of the wavering man. As particularly, *James* 1. 6. Where

Where the Apostle compares him to a wave of the Sea, which we know is always at a very uncertain Stay, and at the mercy of every Wind. But, that man who has his Reason to steer him, should be so liable to be tossed to and fro, and at such great uncertainty, 'is very strange ! His Life we know is at uncertainty, and this *Job* mentions, chap. 14. 2. *man fleeth as a shadow, and continues not.* But, why our Faith should be at any uncertainty, I know not. Man's Life may, nay ought to be disregarded upon occasion, but sure none will say his Faith may. To resign our Life we may be called upon by God's own appointment on many Accounts, and by so doing we do but our Duty. But he that resigns his Faith before he resigns his Breath, falsifies his Baptismal Covenant ; he denies his Saviour, and has quitted all pretences to the benefits of Redemption. I mention Life as it may stand in Competition with Duty ; but as sweet and as valuable as we usually esteem it, a wise man (without any derogation to his Politicks) will make it truckle to his Faith. And this is verified by the Martyrdom of many glorious Saints. For he that will save his Life by a shameful denial of his

his Faith, shall receive a denial of a glorious Immortality from his Saviour before his Father and his holy Angels. Let us then resist the Temptation of all Gainsayers. Our Hearts must be steel'd with resolution against the strange Doctrines that Inveiglers shall Assault us with. We ought not to be afraid at any time to do our Duty ; nay, the more formidable Seducers do appear, the more strongly ought we to be provided against 'em. If they will be obstinate in their Errors, let us be stedfast in and for the Truth ; and thus, like one nail driving out another, our Stedfastness may serve to repel their Obstinacy. This will, in all likelihood, baffle our Adversaries pretences, and the Devil, together with his Agents, shall be daily rebuked with *get ye behind me*. But without great Circumspection we shall not, we cannot conquer this enemy of ours the Devil. He is always lurking after his prey, and *seeking whom he may devour*. He is catching at every thing whereby he may foil us ; he is so busy that he leaves no Stone unturn'd by way of Circumvention. Sometimes Pleasures are the Bait where-with he decoys men ; dressing them up in the liveliest Colours that he can ; putting

ting false Glosses on every Vice on purpose to captivate their Hearts, and by the Temptation lead them so far into sensuality, that, instead of the Christian, there shall be nothing of the Man left. At other times he useth harsher Methods. He drives 'em out of their Religion by Fire and Sword, by the sharpest and severest discipline of Persecutions, telling his Agents, whom he thus employs for the Work, that they do God service by persecuting his Saints, and that they shall take Heaven by such force ; but alas ! for their notable Pains, the wages of Sin will be their only Reward, to wit, death eternal. But though these irreligious ways of propagating Religion are to this day fashionable, so much the more must we endeavour to be so sincerely grounded in the things of it, that we may the better be provided against our Enemies on all hands. Let all the cruelty, tyranny and malice of the Devil or Men combine to make us quit our hold, and they can't do it, if we will behave ourselves like men by being Stedfast, unmoveable, and imitate those Primitive Heroes who have given us shining Examples of their being so. They have endur'd that by the strength of Faith
which

which others durst not behold ; and their Tormenters have been most tormented whilest they have bravely Suffer'd. With what Evenness and Brightness of Mind they bore up under their most fiery Trials, let any one judge that has the least insight into Church-History. Now if every singular and individual Christian will be as truly firm , and as much in earnest with another World as they, then let storms and confusions threaten him, I will say in a Christian Sense as *Horace* (speaking of his Just and Upright Man) has taught me in a Moral :

*Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinæ.*

In a word, we must boldly and resolutely withstand all opposers, whether they are professed Heathens, or sly insinuating Christians that shall endeavour to Undermine us, as it's evident some do. Thro' them *Christendom* has been the chief Nursery of unspeakable inhumanity. As if the Gospel did not teach *us peace, long-suffering*, and the like, but Wars and Confusions, not to live like Men, but Brutes. Histories do condemn the cruelty of persecuting Heathens, but we have
Christi-

Christians now (if I may so call 'em) who have a notable hand at persecutions; and I scarce believe the Devil has been more beholden to the old Heathens than he has been to some of our Modern' Zealous Christians. Zeal which should be the life of Christianity, is now become the ruine of it; things are quite put out of joynt, the nature of things is now scandalously corrupted. That which should unite us to an Holy Union, makes the widest breaches; that which should conform us to God, transforms us into Devils. And all this (forsooth!) is the Christian Religion. The Christian Religion we must all own is the most glorious, most pure Religion in the whole World, if rightly and duely profess'd; but if abused, without all peradventure is the worst. It is a *corruptio optimi*: And a debauched, over-zealous Christian is the worst of men. I call him debauched who is so as to Life and Principles; him over-zealous who goes beyond what is his Authority either from God or Nature, in using sharp methods of Curing by Killing. This runs quite counter to the Gospel of *peace, gentleness, love, meekness*, &c. That Zeal must needs be a very preposterous way of

of doing God service by trespassing upon his commands, an odd way of establishing Religion by rooting up the very Foundation ; and who they are that use these Methods, none can be ignorant. *Seeing then we are compassed about with so great a cloud of Adversaries on all hands, it behoves us to be more firm to our Principles ; as firm as that rock on which our Church is built, and then the gates of hell shall not prevail against us.*

2. What is meant by *always abounding in the work of the Lord*, as it relates to Practice?

Faith is the Foundation of our Religion; but Practice must be the superstructure. The one God gives us, but the other by way of Gratitude we must return to him. And these two in Conjunction compleat the Christian. Practice is that which must Crown our Faith, otherwise it's dead, or which is all one in sense and meaning, it is nothing. St. James tells us so in his 2^d Chapter, which treats of this very thing, *viz. Faith and good works.* For (says he) *what doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath Faith, and have not works ; can Faith save him ?* The Apostle puts the question, and in the subsequent words carries it on in a famili-

at comparison of Charity to the Poor, viz. *If a brother or a sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Be ye warmed, and filled, notwithstanding ye give them not those things which be needful to the body, what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.* In this 17th v. he puts the question out of doubt, and doth in effect aver, That as a Charitable wish will avail nothing when the Act of Charity may be perform'd, even so Faith signifies no more without being seconded with Practice. A bare Faith separated from good works shall profit a man at the great day of Account, just as much as a Niggard's Blessing, or the meer bidding a Beggar, *be warm'd and fill'd*, will give him food and raiment. 'Tis true, *be ye warm'd and fill'd*, may possibly be an hearty Prayer for a Brother, when it comes from a poor well-meaning Man who has nothing to give his fellow-labourer in want, besides it. But if a rich Niggard shall turn his distressed Neighbour away with his Prayer for him, when as he ought to Feed or Clothe him, this is putting a trick upon duty, and giving his Neighbour as well as God that which is an abomination. For how can
that

that Prayer which is abominable to God, be profitable to Man: Nothing can redound to my own or my brother's benefit through Prayer, but by the blessing of God who hears and accepts this my bounden Duty. When a man shall with unfeigned Lips and a sincere Heart petition his Maker to relieve the extremity of a distressed Brother, we may expect a blessing to descend upon the Person so distressed. For it's said in Holy Writ, the *Prayer of a righteous man availeth much*. But this can't be expected from a greedy, covetous Person, whom God in his Holy Word is said to *Abhor*: And he that is abhorred of God, doth but mock himself if he fancies his Prayer shall be accepted by him. Could we suppose the greedy Miser to be endued with a power miraculous, and by a bare word able to clothe the Naked, and feed the Hungry, then I'll own the *be ye warmed and filled*, would amount to somewhat. But could he do so, I presume he would begin at Home, and be working a miracle of this nature first upon himself, and by that preserve his own starving Carcasse, and prevent the prodigy of feeling Poverty in the midst of Plenty. But since such a forlorn Creature cannot be supposed either by Miracle

to perform (for sure the Holy Ghost never inhabits such Breasts, especially in an extraordinary manner) or indeed by Prayer to avail any thing with God ; nothing then can be thought in this case to benefit a poor Brother, but an actual relieving his extremity, or, what *Solomon* bids us do to a common Enemy, *Prov. 25. 21, 22. If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat, and if he be thirsty give him water to drink : for thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee.* This is the Charity that must profit my Brother, and nothing else must commute, provided I have it to give. I confess Prayer going along with our Alms, advanceth our Charity ; but when offered to evade Alms, it becomes an high Affront to God, and instead of bringing down a Blessing upon our Neighbour, we bring a Curse upon our Selves ; for by thus prevaricating, our very Prayer shall be turned into Sin. To apply then. Faith without good works shall no more save a Man at the last day of Account, than an empty wish, or a delusive bidding a starveling be warm'd and fill'd, will provide him Food and Raiment. If then we will have our Faith to stand us in any stead, we must take care
that

that it be lively, and if lively, it will be attended with Practice and an habitual exercise of Good and Virtuous Actions. For it is not a meer heartless belief that God is, but a whole and entire reliance on him, trust in him, and a Life answerable, that must prove us at the great Audit. For if a meer belief that there is a God, would constitute a Person Faithful, and put him in a capacity of Eternal Salvation, then the Devils themselves might be said to be so, and in such a capacity. For it's certain they believe that there is a God as well as we, and it's said in this very Chapter, that they believe and tremble. But I deny their belief to be as ours. The Devils believe, that is, they have reason to believe God in his Existence, for they know him in his vindictive Power, from their Sufferings. *If I go down into hell, thou art there also, says David.* Upon the account then of their Knowledge, the Devils may well be said to tremble; for such is the Justice as well as Power of God, that they can now no more appease the one, than shelter themselves from the other. They fear God as well as we, but then I deny their Fear to be as ours. For ours is coupled with Love, or indeed swallow'd up in it;

but theirs is not so. And to fear the Lord in a Christian Sense, is nothing else but to Love him. St. *John* in his first Epistle, Chapt. 4. v. 18. Affirms this, where he says, *There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment.* And this is the fear of Devils, it is a fear tormenting, and will be eternally so. So then, though the Devils themselves may be said in one sense to fear God, they do not, they cannot love him. They dread their Punishment, but can't in Hell, as Man may upon Earth, expect any Reward for their Sufferings. They know that God is just; but what then, they are out of the reach of his Mercy; That the Righteous shall be saved, but that *they* shall perish everlastingly: And this is that Worm that never dieth, and that Fire that never shall be quenched. This, I hope, may in some measure hint to us what it is that constitutes a Christian, to wit, a true and lively Faith, and a good Life, grounded upon that Faith, set forth in these words, *Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.* Now to be *always abounding in the work of the Lord*, can't be taken in a physical or natural acceptance, so as to admit of no discontinuation

uation in the Act; for this is impossible to be perform'd by Man; his frame and constitution cannot bear it. Human Nature requires relaxations and intermissions in point of Duty. Nature demands 'em, as we may observe from its propensity to intervals of Rest and Recreation; of Sleeping, Eating and Drinking. A Man in his sleep may be said to be a Pious, Good, Wise Man, as to the general tenour of his Life, though he neither thinks, speaks, or does any Religious Thing at that time: He may be an hard Student, though not every minute of his Life actually at his Exercise. *Rejoyce evermore*, says Holy Text: But he that takes these words in the natural Sense, misconstrues the words, and shall make one Scripture to contradict another. For if we were to *rejoyce evermore* in the natural acceptation of the Phrase, the Wise Man in his *Eccles. 3. v. 4.* is wrong; where he says, *there is a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.* Therefore to be always thus abounding, amounts to no more than this. "Whatsoever ye do, carry a strict
"and severe hand over your selves, so,
"as to respect God in the main; and
"let your outward State be what it will,

“ let the World go how it will ; let it
 “ either Smile or Frown upon you, you
 “ must be sure to observe this Standard,
 “ of abounding in the work of the Lord,
 “ which is, to be habitually given to
 “ Piety and Virtue, and so living in this
 “ World, as if, my brethren, ye really
 “ respected another. Once more ; By
always abounding in the work of the Lord,
 is not meant one virtuous Action, tho’
 never so often repeated, from the com-
 mon Maxim, that one Action doth not
 denominate a Person this or that. The
 best Action doth not do it. *Ex. gr.*
 Receiving the Blessed Sacrament of the
 Lord’s Supper is the best Action a man
 can do in his whole Life ; yet this very
 Religious Duty without being seconded
 with a good Life, doth not speak him a
 Christian. For to be always thus
 abounding, must import a constant apply-
 ing our minds to those things which con-
 cern our Main, to wit, our well-being
 in a Future State. It implies a diligent,
 punctual and nice looking to our goings.
 There must be a constant series or com-
 plication of good Actions, all tending
 to the same good End, *viz.* the Glory of
 our Maker. It must be our chief plea-
 sure to be thus *abounding in the work of*
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the Lord; our meat and drink to do the will of our heavenly Father; our hunger and thirst to work righteousness; and from this continual course nothing must divert us. We must be totally busy about our grand Concern; and moreover, if we will be Saved, we must be very nice and cautious too in this our Worldly Course. For the Gospel, which is our Rule to walk by, is very curious as to matters of our Duty, and that in two Respects, to wit, in respect of the Time, and also in respect of the Manner of all our Religious Performances.

1. In respect of the Time, it is mighty curious, nice and punctual. It requires its Professors to be always in a readiness for Duty, and though it admits of some Divertisements, it commands a speedy return. We must Exercise all the Virtues which it teacheth, and that always too. The short is, it requires us to be morally incessant in the great and prime Duties of Godliness, Justice and Sobriety. I mention these three Virtues, as comprehending the whole Duty of Man. As to our Godliness we must be always upon the Wing, not off and on like hypocritical Mongrels, and at Uncertainties in our Religious Affairs. But we are all too apt to
break

break this Rule. As for instance, sometimes we find a true and lively warmth within, from Pious Raptures and secret Movements, and these shall Elevate our Souls to a mighty pitch. There may be confession of Sins to God, hearty Petitions for forgiveness, and the hot fit shall continue some space; but then we no sooner go out of the more immediate Presence of God, but we forget him too. God's Word shall be heard with Joy for a spurt, but after come the cares of this World, and spoil the good Seed. Sure some Soils are too barren for its growth, for as soon as sown, it shall be devoured. Let us consider the great Duty of Justice, and we shall find, we are as aguish here as in point of Devotion. Sometimes the fit of Justice seizeth us, sometimes it leaves us; sometimes we would fain be honest, but we are too prone to forget our selves; we we have been Faithful in small Matters; yet, when a greater Temptation has presented it self, we have falsified our Integrity, and fell away. Look upon Temperance, and you shall find that we are as far to seek in that, as in any of the former. We may have good Resolutions of securing our Health, and keeping our
our

our Bodies in due order, that all their Senses may more briskly and vigorously perform their Functions, and move in a more constant, regular way. We know that by this not only the Senses External, but the Internal too shall do better Service, and the Mind become more Sublime. This or such like Resolution is as profitable as rational, and a glorious one it is if duely Maintain'd; but if not, we have betray'd our Resolution, and must disown our Title to Temperance. He then that will be Godly, Righteous, or Sober, pray let him take care that he is constantly and perseveringly so.

2. The Gospel is nice in respect of the manner of our Religious Performances. Every one must not only be persevering, but hearty and sincere also in the Duties of Religion, that is, the Heart and Tongue must go together: Otherwise Devotion is nothing else but Hypocrisy; and Hypocrisy is that which will be sure to shut the Gates of Heaven against us. To profess God with our Lips, when our Hearts run astray; to cry Lord, Lord, we are vile, and yet continue so! that is, to dissemble with God in order to retain our Sins, is as great an Affront as can be put upon him who alone

alone searcheth the Heart and Reins. Moreover, it lays a *stumbling-block* in our Brother's way, and occasioneth great mischief: For by this hypocritical demeanour, Atheism insinuates it self, and slides into men's Hearts before they are aware. For to find Men very Pious, and yet very Villains, will be apt to stagger us in our Faith, unless we have so far learn'd our Apostle, as to be *stedfast, unmoveable*. Thus it holds as to Justice and Sobriety in the manner of our Actions. It is not the being Righteous in this thing, but a Knave in that, which shall Characterize a Person Just. No, but he that shall be deem'd so, must be Upright in all his dealings with the sons of Men; true and faithful to his Trust; not only there where there is no Power to deceive, but likewise where there is. For to be Just by outward constraint, or compulsion, whether it be out of fear of being detected in a Villany, or want of Ability to perform it, is (vulgarly speaking) making a Virtue of Necessity, which is indeed a destroying the very Notion of it. I take this to be an adequate definition of Virtue, viz. that it is, *Intellectualis vis animæ, quæ impressionibus animalibus sive passionibus corporeis ita dominatur ut in singulis*

galis actionibus illud facile prosequatur quod absolute & simpliciter optimum est, Enchirid. Eth. Lib. 1. Cap. 3. de virtute, &c. I will conclude then, That he who is Virtuous must be so upon a stronger Tie than that of force. For *facile prosequi quod absolute & simpliciter optimum est*, argues the government of the whole Man so far, as to make him Proof against the evil suggestions of his Lusts, or Passions, and he is so far from being Virtuous by force, that no force can make him otherwise. And without any great struglings against, or itchings towards Cheating, Lying, Extorting, or False-swearing, the Man dares be True and Upright, let what will come on't for his being so. He is a temperate Man who is altogether such; neither is it the abstaining from this or that Vice that shall commute for the commission of another. If I avoid Drunkenness that I may the better Gluttonize it, I am equally guilty of the Sin of Intemperance; for Gluttony and Drunkenness are of an equal obliquity, and equally destructive: And a Man had e'en as well lose his life in the water, as by a fall of a Mountain.

I proceed to my third and last Thing, viz. the Reason we have to be thus *stedfast*,

fast, unmoveable, &c. the Reward implied: Forasmuch as ye know, that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Nothing doth more powerfully encourage men to hard Labour, than sure grounds of a sufficient Reward for their Endeavours. I say, sure grounds of a sufficient Reward: And that we all stand upon this firm bottom, is evident; for 'tis a Promise made by him who is *stedfast and unmoveable for ever*. Therefore if we are not wanting to our selves, it must necessarily be perform'd, by reason that he who makes this Promise is of that indefectible Holiness, that it's not imaginable he should deceive us; of that infinite Power, that it is impossible he should want Ability to perform this his Promise made to us: And this was that which made the Apostle say, *forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord*. If any thing will make us active and laborious in this our Christian Calling, I should think this must. For what was it that enabled the Good and the Great heretofore, but the earnest looking for this Eternal Reward? Was it not this which animated 'em all along to Live strictly, and Die manfully? Was it not this which made 'em Act and suffer so bravely as they did,

did, by which they were deem'd above the World, and of whom it was not worthy? 'Twas this which made *Moses* withstand the great Temptation of being call'd the son of *Pharaoh's* daughter, and chuse to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. In the 11th Chapt. to the *Heb.* we find a great company of Patriarchs signaliz'd for their great Faith to God. They despis'd this World, because they reached after another. 'Twas this by which Prophets subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. 'Twas this which made the Apostles esteem their afflictions as light and momentany, for they waited for that far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. 'Twas this which made succeeding Christians so gloriously stout, and enabled Martyrs to laugh at Torments, and defy Death in its ugliest dress; for they consider'd, that though Afflictions might endure the Night of this world, yet in the Morning of Eternity Joy should spring forth and be Triumphant.

Since then we have the glorious company

pany of Saints and Martyrs set before us, let us not be Revolters. We have as good a claim to the Promises of God in his Gospel, and the benefits of Christ Crucified as they; let us not then quit this our Tenure, but rather let us, as they did, acknowledge it by our Lives, and, if occasion be, seal it by our Deaths. If our good Lives will not satisfy some men that we are Christians, perhaps our Deaths may be some Proof to 'em that we were so. Though some would not acknowledge Christ to be the *Messias* whilst living, yet, when dead, believ'd him to be the Son of God. And though Miracles do not accompany us to the Grave, as they did our Saviour, yet the very manner of dying, or a courageous welcoming of Death, has sometimes worked a blessed Effect upon persecuting and bloody-minded Men. For they made this or the like Reflection with themselves: "Somewhat more than Human doth buoy up these Men, which makes 'em look Death in the face so undauntedly as they do. There is somewhat sure in this thing called Eternity, or so many wise Men would not throw away their Lives, and leave this pleasant World so contentedly and alarmingly

“criously as they do. Somewhat from
“above sure whispers these Men, that
“all the great Promises made in the Holy
“Gospel, shall be made good to the
“Faithful and Upright, and all those
“who lead their lives by that Standard;
“and let Heathens, Atheists, Hypocrites,
“Worldlings, prate what they will of the
“Greatness of this World, and the mere
“Chimera or Nothing of the next, yet,
“if they are not infatuated or grown stu-
“pid, this, *viz.* that it is good to be safe,
“must carry some weight with ’em. But
none are safe in respect of the other World
but they that have liv’d righteously in this.
For there are but these three Suppositi-
ons which can afford any the least com-
fort to the Wicked when Death appears,
to wit, Either that there is no Heaven
or Hell; or that the Soul shall be annih-
lated after Death; or that God is so mer-
ciful that he will not punish our Misdeeds
hereafter. Now supposing that either of
these be true, yet, I hope, all will own
that the Righteous still are upon equal
balance with the Wicked, and after
Death will be as equally happy, or as
equally nothing as they. But on the
contrary, the very fear that there may
be an Heaven or Hell, (and such a Fear
E doth

doth possess, I think, the most profligate of 'em all) that the Soul is Immortal, and God will judge us according to what we have acted in this Life, this will be an over-balance to all Atheistical pretences, and we may say of the Faithless and Insincere Men of the World that betray their Saviour, It had been good for 'em if they had never been born. But I wonder we should be so forgetful of our selves. The World is not alter'd in its frame since the early days of Christianity; Man carries the same Nature about him now, as he did then; the Gospel shines with as bright a Light now as ever; and why our Lives should be in no measure answerable, is unimaginable. The things indeed of this World are present, and upon that account they strike our Senses with greater Keeness and Appetite; yet notwithstanding, methinks, the Glory and Duration of the Things in Prospect, should so far transport us as to make us overlook the little, momentany Things here below, which are so continually dwelling upon our grosser Faculties. For I verily think, that never did any man bear a prosperous or adverse State with an even hand, but it was through the great and pleasant View he had into the other World.

World. The meer light of Nature has sometimes raised the Souls of men to such great Contemplations, that they have forgot their Bodily Supplies, whilst they have been fed with the divine repast of Eternity. And if the bare light of Nature could thus Elevate the sons of Men, sure this Light when augmented with unspeakable Addition, must do mightier Things yet. And so it has. Witness those many Saints and Martyrs under the Gospel, that have shewed us the way to everlasting Bliss through a severe and exemplary Piety. Could we trace such Men through the whole course of their strict Lives, we should find the end of their Sanctity to be this: They consider'd the things of this World as a successive Vanity, therefore as they knew they were to have, so they took care to make Provision for somewhat that was more lasting and more answering the end of their Being, viz. *for a better and more enduring substance, even the inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for us*, 1 Pet. 1. 4. Let us all then reach after these great Men who have went before us. Then, and not till then, may we expect a joyful passage from this vale of Misery and Va-

nity, to Eternal Happiness ; an Happiness that is much beyond the sphere of a finite Understanding to Comprehend, and that far surpasseth the greatest Mortal Intellect to have an adequate Idea of.

For let the greatest Wit in the world raise his Fancy to its most exquisite pitch, and he shall come far short of describing what are the blessed Fruits of this our Labour, which shall not be in vain in the Lord. *St. Paul*, as great as he was, lost himself in the description of the future Glory, and after all his most noble flights tending that way, he was forc'd to sit down with a glimmering, negative description, and say it was *such as neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* But yet this we know, though still but negatively, *Rev. 21. 4.* where *St. John* says, *there (meaning Heaven) shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be pain any more.* We may be in heaviness through the many Troubles of this World, but when Eternity appears, these shall vanish and be no more. Though (as I have said) we can't comprehend what the Reward of another World is, yet the Holy *Psalmist* has in some

some measure inform'd us, for he says,
*In his presence is fulness of joy, and at his
right hand pleasures for evermore.* And
this, when all is said, is that which may
lift up our Spirits in the day of trial here,
and will consummate our Felicity here-
after, viz. That it shall know no End.

For was the Glory of the other World
ever to cease, or not to be, it would not
be commensurate to a Rational Soul,
which is Immortal. Were the Angels in
Heaven encircled with all their Glory,
supposed in time to be divested of it,
and they were conscious to themselves of
this their short-liv'd Heaven, this would
detract from their Glory, for Heaven
would cease and be no more. But since
the Glory of Heaven doth every way an-
swer the Being of those Blessed Spirits,
and doth satisfy their widest and noblest
Capacity, let not Man despond and be
cast down, for I would have him know,
that Angels are but his Fellow-Creatures,
and he was made for a joyful Eternity as
well as they.

The short is, If all the great Promises
made by God in his Holy Word, if all
the excellent descriptions of Future Bliss,
will not work the Blessed Effect upon us
so far as to perswade us to the attain-

ment of it, then may we live as we please here, but yet God will bring us into Judgment. For they that have liv'd as they should do, stedfast in Faith, joyful through Hope, shall receive a glorious Immortality ; and they that have denied their Faith, and made it stoop to any worldly Interest, and have served the Devil instead of God, these shall be Rewarded too, for they shall be eternally Tormented.

These are the Folk that shall be turn'd into Hell, because they have forgot God ; there the Atheist and Hypocrite shall burn together, *where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.* If our Lusts, or our Carnal Advantages shall weigh more with us than the Promises of God himself; admonitions to a good Life are thrown away upon us, Religion serves but for a turn, and then we may well pronounce our Faith Vain. *Be ye stedfast, unmoveable,* shall have no place here ; for in time of Trial we yield and sink, and are not able to bear the Burden ; our Hope falters and flies away, and instead of firmly and confidently relying upon our God, we distrust and Blaspheme him ; we are for the things in hand, let what will become of us in the other World.
And

And this is the substance of the Religion of a carnal-minded Man ; Let it be attended with Ease, Profit and Delight here, and his Faith of the things not seen, shall sit pretty well upon him ; but let Dangers, and Troubles, and Persecutions threaten him, and he dares not stand the Test, but falls away. But I hope we have not so learn'd Christ. Therefore, my Brethren, if ye desire to be partakers of the Estate of good and just Men made Perfect, hold fast your Profession ; or, to speak one word more comprehensive than all the rest, *Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

Now to God the Father, to God the Son, to God the Holy Ghost, three Persons and one God, be all Honour and Glory for ever and ever. Amen.

 1 JOHN II. 15.

Love not the World, neither the things that are in the World. If any man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him.

A Great Duty incumbent on Man is the government of himself. This is a Duty which highly concerns him as he is a Rational Creature, and upon that to be supposed to distinguish between Good and Evil. Man is of a Noble Extract, the very best of God's Creation (Angels excepted) and therefore may well be thought to look for greater things than what this World affords him. His Thoughts then should soar aloft, as becomes such a Glorious Being, and not sink into Dirt, and grovel upon Vanity. His Mind is of a Sublime and Divine Nature, and should fix upon nothing but what is an Object every way suitable to its Essence. If it suffer Sensuality in any measure to advance it self, it will rattle and debase it,

it, and be apt to spoil the Man. For let but Sensuality take place, and the Man quickly sinks into a Degeneracy. And of this we must have a mighty care. For we have two contrary Principles to manage, *viz.* Spirit and Matter; and it's as much as we can do to make these stand in awe, they are so continually jarring and clashing with each other, and as such will be too headstrong for us, unless we carry a severe hand. We are all subject to the disorders which are occasioned by the Flesh, and they do mightily beset us; insomuch, that we shall not stand our ground against 'em, unless we guard our selves by the most critical confinement that possibly we can. In order therefore to do this, we must curb our wild Affections; for to follow the Dictates of these Blind Guides, would be the ready way to fall into the Ditch. Whatsoever these give us is but false Coin, and bears not the right Image and Superscription. These are the Rabble of the little World that make such Tumults and Uproars within, in order to dethrone our Reason; for they will not have it to reign over us. Our Reason tells us we should pursue that
which

which is most fuitable, most agreeable to our Nature. It shews that our Nature is capable of greater things than what this World affords us, and consequently that we should live up to the Glory of it. This is the advice of Reason, and if we would faithfully follow this Guide, we should not so often do amiss.

But Scripture, I mean Holy Scripture Revealed, goes higher yet, for that not only tells us that we ought to live as becomes us, but chalks out a plain and easie way which leads us to do this. It gives us a short and easie Lesson of Loving God, and our Duty towards Him, instead of Loving the World. But neither Reason nor Scripture shall divert the course of the Worldly-Man. Though they speak to us not to love the World so far as to debase and sink us below our Being, yet the Worldling shall puff at this as a Doctrine fit for Fools and Melancholy Men who know not how to estimate the benefits of this Life. And let the Men of Reason or Inspiration be never so convincing, the upshot is, they that are Worldlings will be Worldlings still. To alter their Course, or flinch from their way of
Living,

Living, would be a Folly not to be Pardon'd by the Atheistical Tribe, those Sons of Earth, who never think a man lives up to his Reason till he has e'en lost it in a Surfeit of Living. Though by the way, it's a sort of Living of so inferior a Rank, that 'tis below even the Beasts that perish. For the Beasts observe their Order in which they were Created; they fail not to answer their end, and by so doing, even those very Animals glorify their Creator. But Man, whom God has endued with a Rational Soul, has so debased it, that he seems to forfeit his Claim to so Glorious an Exaltation of Being. For (to speak in the Royal Psalmist's Phrase) *he being in honour has no understanding, but is compared to the beasts that perish.* Man being in Honour, must be meant by the Holy Man, that his Nature surpasseth that of Brute, as that of Angel doth him; or rather more: For when all is said, Angels are but our Elder Brothers, and though their Inheritance be greater than ours, yet we shall certainly partake with them, if we live so as to make it our Main to Love the Father. God has made Man little lower than the Angels, and if he is to be compared to the Beasts that
perish,

perish, it's altogether through his own Misdemeanour. God made him upright at first, and though he fell, yet he has shewed his Mercy in repairing the breach, through the Redemption of his Son, the Eternally Begotten, and by that has given him a full power to stand once more against his Enemy the Devil. So then if he now stumbles, it is not through want of Light to guide him, but through want of due using the same. Fire may be very intense, but if stifled with Embers, its operation shall be lost. A Man's Understanding may be bright and serene of it self; but if it be benumb'd or clouded through want of due Exercise, or through misuse and undue means; then that which should be the Light within, becomes Darkness, and the Man is hurried whithersoever the Beast shall drive. Let his Affections dominere and rule, and he is gone to all intents. Reason has no power to exert it self, whilst these Tyranize, and the Man and Beast shall be upon the same Level. But to prevent this Combustion, let us be advised by my Text, *not to love the World, neither the things that are in it*; that is, let us not love the things of this Life to that degree as to prefer 'em before
before

before God and our Duty ; for if we do, we love not the Father, we do not love him as God, as the Fountain of all our Good. Therefore 'tis our business to set bounds to our appetites in proportion to the real worth and intrinsic value these things sublunary do bear.

In speaking to these words, I shall consider these two things, *viz.*

I. First the Prohibition, *Love not the World, neither the things that are in the World.*

Secondly, And Lastly, the Reason for this Prohibition, to wit, the inconsistency of the love of the World with the love of God ; for it's said, *if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

I. First then for the Prohibition, *Love not the World, &c.*

These Words in sense and meaning do not debar us the benefits of these Worldly Goods, and leave us destitute of all manner of enjoyment of 'em. No sure: For to think this, would be to imagine that God has deluded Mankind, as first to create all things for the use of Man, and after that, sign 'em with a *Touch not, Taste not.* 'Twould be a reflection upon the Care and Providence of God towards us his Mortals. For we know that Man had no sooner a Being, but we find him

to have *dominion over all the Earth*, and ever since he has had this tenure. The Earth then, and the things therein, are in some measure ours, for we challenge a claim by a Divine Right. But notwithstanding this our Claim, we must have a care: For our power is but narrow and limited, and we may forfeit our Right by a precarious use of the Creature. We must take care then lest we do violence to Privilege by any abuse of these things here. And that we may be the more upon our guard, let Moderation guide us in our whole course; and this is that Virtue which our Text invites us to. This Virtue teaches us to proportion our concupiscible Affections to the value which right Reason stamps upon those things we do desire. For every degree of desire which exceeds the real value of the thing desired, is irrational. He who sets his Affections on the things of the Earth, that is, he who hankers after these Worldly Things so far as to neglect his greater Concerns, forgets his main; he Idolizeth the Creature, and contemns his Creator; he sets up a God of his own making, and to all intents doth as really Worship the same as much as *Nebuchadnezzar* did his Golden Image.

But

But speaking of the things of this World, I shall take 'em under a threefold consideration, to wit, the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life. These are said to be not of the Father, but of the World, as we find in the verse immediately following my Text: And these I shall hint upon under the notion of Pleasure, Riches and Honour.

I. Then for Pleasure. *Solomon* says, *Prov. 21. 17. He that loveth pleasure, shall be a poor man: He that loveth wine and oyl, shall not be rich.* As much as if he had said, The Voluptuous Man, in all humane probability, will waste his Substance or Estate. For he that loves continually to pamper his Carcase, and caresses his Senses, to spend Sumptuously, and fare Delicately, must take the natural and unavoidable effects of such his Riotous way of Living, *viz.* Poverty and Contempt. Though we should set aside the punishment of another World for our pleasant Sinning, in this I do not doubt but excess of Pleasure may be a sort of Mortification even in this life. For let the Voluptuary after all his exalted Changes and Interludes with which he has so highly delighted himself, but once condense into a sober Thought, and I verily

verily think he will joyn with the Wise Man, and pronounce 'em not only Vanity, but *Vexation of Spirit* too. A Man may perhaps dote upon these things of Pleasure through the instigation of his Lusts; yet let him consult Reason, and it shall tell him they are beneath him. They may sooth and ravish for a Season, but then they tire and jade of a sudden, and carry a Sting in the end. An Argument, I think, that God did never design 'em to be the business of a Man's whole Life. For the Pleasure which must answer the dignity of Man, must be quite of another hue, and of a more lasting make, and commensurate to his Being: But no Pleasure will be thus commensurable to him, but the pleasure of Conscience here, and of a glorious Immortality in the other World. I'll grant, that we, whilst clogg'd with Mortality, are apt to slacken in our Duty; our Bodies cannot keep pace with our Souls, and upon this account God allows us to recreate our infirm selves. But then we must have a care lest we forget our selves too, and instead of making that which should be our Recreation only, our Business, our constant Exercise and Employment. This spoils

spoils the Rule of the good Satyrift, *Voluptates commendat rarior usus*. Now if this holds in a Moral, I am fure it doth much more fo in a Christian fenfe. For this Rule reaches thofe common little things only which make up the pleafure of the meer outward man. It can't reach Tranquility of Mind, or the folid peace of Confcience for a good Life fpent: For Tranquility of Mind, and Peace of Confcience, are the *non Ultra* of the Happinefs of the Moral Man. Therefore *Juvenal* muft needs mean the common Pleafures from without, and of fuch his Words hold good, *Sat. 11. line 206.*

— *Facere hoc non poffis quinque diebus
Continuis: quia funt talis quoque tædia vitæ
Magna.*

The fhort is, the pleafures which we are to avoid, or at leaft, their excefs, are thofe of the Body, which are too transporting and violent to laft, and confequently muft weary. But the Pleafure of the Mind moves by degrees, gently and flowly, and fticks by a Man for ever. As then the Pleafures from without can, in the main, give us no true
F and

and solid satisfaction, so we do but degenerate if we give up our selves to 'em. They are at best but little and momentany, very fleeting and short-liv'd, and are no ways corresponding to our better part, the Soul. They are too mean and dull (if I may so say) for Man to exercise himself upon. For Man ought still to have an Eye to this, *viz.* never to Degrade himself, but rather make that his Pleasure which is the Happiness of the whole Man. For instance: Let his Understanding be ever reaching after those objects which are really in themselves most Noble, most Worthy to be known. Let his Will fasten upon nothing so much as upon that which is in it's own nature most amiable, and consequently most worthy to be chosen and desired. And when these Manly faculties are rightly and duly employ'd, I do not doubt but the Brute part, the Affections, will be led in Triumph after 'em, and not suffered to dwell upon any object but what is able to entertain and feast an immortal Soul. They shall fix upon things that are far transcending these earthly fruitions; upon things which shall give a better relish and gust than these empty toys. For if a Rational

nal Creature could not expect any solid Satisfaction than what a meer Animal Life and his external Senses would afford him, his Rationality is Nonsense; it's a superfluous thing, and stands him in little stead unless to plague and vex him upon every little disappointment. But as there are more excellent objects for him to exercise his faculties upon, they are of excellent use. Let him but exercise his thoughts upon God, the spiritual and invisible World, and he shall not want an object worthy his largest capacity, and such is the delight of the Blessed Spirits above, who are wrapt up in pleasures infinite and inexhaustible. The Pleasures of this World sit mighty well upon the Brute, whose being is wholly wrapt up and enclosed here; but they are not at all becoming a Rational Creature, who is made for better things.

For alas! how far short are these things of the Soul of Man, which is Eternal? All these Trifles which we so extravagantly pursue, we shall soon be depriv'd of; we shall quickly launch forth into Eternity, and carry nothing with us but the Good or Evil we have done in this Life. What then should more persuade us to set bounds to our Desires? What more rea-

sonable than that we should curb our Affections and Passions when we see the Evil that attends 'em? Let us not pronounce to our selves the Rich man's Requiem, *Soul take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.* Let us not fancy our selves to be things of Pleasure, Creatures sent into the World to sport away our days, lest such our Mirth do end in Heaviness. There is a saying, *Eccles. 11. 9.* very well agreeing to my purpose; It is this: *Rejoyce, O young man! in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.* The former part of the verse might suit the humour of the Voluptuary; To Rejoyce, to Cheer up, to walk according to his Heart's desire, and to do what is good in his own Eyes, is a pleasant Lecture; but the latter part, *viz. but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment,* closeth the Irony, and is very Tragical and Severe. The very words are a short comment upon our earthly Pleasures. They treat us at first with a glimmering smile, but leave us at last in Torture and Confusion. Would to God then the Darlings

of the World would be pleased to take a view of themselves, and soberly consider what there is in these little, momentary Pleasures, that they should Sacrifice their Souls for the Enjoyment of 'em! Let those who have had the greatest intimacy with these things, compare 'em with what they are to pay for em, and if this will not convince them of their Folly, let them Pleasure it on still in their own course, and receive their conviction in another World.

The 2d Consideration was Wealth, or Riches. Riches are reputed great Blessings; and (as the world goes) happy is the Man that abounds therewith. And indeed, by the violent pursuits we do make after 'em, one would be tempted to imagine they were a preservative against any Misery or Misfortune whatsoever. But they are so far from it, that the Wise Man says, *they profit not in the day of wrath.* For heaps of Wealth (especially when gotten by ill and undue means) shall stand us in no stead when God shall be pleased to call us to Account. Righteousness shall be a defence, but Riches shall be none. *The love of money is the root of all evil,* saith Holy Text; intimating the inordinacy or extravagancy

cy of Love; a Love that shall so take up the whole Man, that nothing must come in competition with it; a Love that carries such a monstrous greediness with it, that even God himself shall be Sold, rather than the impious Miser refuse his Gain.

But nothing more demonstrates this abominable Love of Wealth, than the great violences People do to themselves for the sake of it. They put forth their utmost to be Masters of it, and if they can have large possessions, what Men so Great, so Brave, or (as the word runs) so Substantial as they? Though, God knows, these substantial men as we are apt to call 'em, are oftentimes the most wretched, forlorn, inconsiderable People that live. Neither is it Money that makes the Man.

But speaking of the Riches of this World, I shall consider how far the desire of them may extend, lest perchance we exceed those limits which are set us both by God and Nature. They in themselves simply considered can't add to, or diminish from, our real Happiness; but it lies in the power of him who possesseth 'em, to be Happy or Miserable, from the good use or abuse he makes of 'em. When we use 'em not inordinately but moderately;

ly ; when we don't consume upon our Lusts, or play the slothful Servant, and wrap up in a Napkin , but benefit our selves and others , then is our manage Wise and Profitable. For it's certain I may desire a supply for Necessities of Nature , or Conveniences of Life. And with a bare supply for these things we ought to be Content. If we have Food and Raiment, let us be therewith content. But notwithstanding, if it shall please God to answer a noble and large Heart with a large Estate, then are they good and profitable to the Owner. For such an one communicates to those that stand in Need. *He feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, relieves the oppressed,* and is continually displaying his beams of Charity to all that are about him. He constantly remembers the End for which his Wealth is given him ; he considers that they are not his own, but committed to him as a Steward that must one day give Account to his Lord and Master. He is wise, and Christianly generous. He gives to his poor Neighbour, and by that he gives to himself : The best Gift certainly which he can bestow. The Wise man I am sure confirms what I say, *Prov.* 19. 17. *He that hath pity upon the poor*

(says he) *lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given will he pay him again.* Encouragement enough, one would think, to be Charitable, for by being so, we make God our Debtor, and he will not fail to pay us again with Interest and Increase. Could the greedy Miser be tempted to give ear to *Solomon*, and respect the reversion of another World, instead of gaping after the Interest of this, I don't doubt but his Reason might tell him, he lov'd himself then, better than now he doth. Riches then would be no longer a Burthen to load and crush his better part, for he would be apt to rate their worth purely from the benefit they should bring from sober usings, and chearful distributions. And in all his abundance he would keep himself in such a due Medium, that neither Prodigality nor Covetousness should approach to hurt him. Such an one can't be said to love Riches, so as to set his Heart upon 'em. But there are a sort of People who are sunk into so miserable a degeneracy, that *Solomon* with all his wisdom shall not betray them into Charity. Such as these shall run quite counter to the words of my Text, and love the things of this World, especially Riches,
with

with the most violent passion and greediness that can be thought of. I mean the covetous; the covetous whom God abhors. For how should God love them who endeavour to dethrone him, and unmake their Creator by worshipping the creature? What should provoke God's jealousy more than this? Did not he punish the *Israelites* heretofore with sundry Plagues and Afflictions for their cursed Idolatry? And is not loving one's Money to that degree as to forget God, or prefer it before him, is not this Idolatry? Doth not the Scripture say so, and admonish against it? As particularly, *Coloss. 3. 5.* Where we are desired to *mortify our members which are on the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness which is Idolatry.* And why, I wonder, is Covetousness called Idolatry, but by reason it displaceth God, and sets up the Interest of this World in his stead? Well might the Holy Apostle call this inordinate Affection, when by it we forsake God to serve Mammon. There is another Text very apposite to this purpose, and lies in the face of the Covetous wretch, it is, *Luke 12. 15.* where 'tis said, *take heed and beware of covetousness, for a man's life consisteth not in the things which*

which he possesseth; and so down to the 22^d verse by way of Parable; where our Saviour by the mouth of the Evangelist tells us in what care the rich Miser was to build Barns for his Store. Barns he had already, but (it seems) they were not large enough, and upon that he would pull them down and build bigger: but he was prevented of his design, for that very night his Soul was to be required of him, and then build the Barns he that would; and it's said v. 21. as a conclusion of the whole Parable, *so is he that layeth up treasure for himself*, and is not rich towards God. A shrewd indication that it may be any man's case now, as it was his in the Gospel. And many more Texts there be which sufficiently admonish the Misers of this Age; but I shall not stand to enumerate: only this I could heartily wish, to wit, That no man would promise himself any futurity of this Life, but rather that he would carry a strict eye towards Eternity; that he would always bear in his Breast this Memento, *viz.* That he shall one day give Account of all his Abundance receiv'd here; and if he has manag'd it to the best advantage, he shall have the *Euge bone* pronounc'd upon him; but if he has either dissipated his
Talent

Talent, or niggardly wrapt it in a Napkin, he shall have the doom of the wicked and slothful Servant, and the Tragedy shall end *in his being bound hand and foot, and cast into outer darkness.*

Having hitherto spoke of the Pleasures and Riches of this world, and how far the desire of 'em may extend: I come now to speak of the third Thing, *viz.* Honour.

To this men have a natural Aspiring. 'Tis this which pulseth on the lower sort to approach the condition of their Superiors. And what is it that prompts 'em to this, but Ambition, that great Leveller of Mankind, which throws all into confusion, tumult and disorder? It was the Sin of our first Parent, and has been handed down to his Posterity. He might have continued happy, had he been but modestly content; but Ambition got the ascendant over him so far, that he was not satisfied with the state of Man, but thought to be as God too. His Ambition was his greatest disaster, for his proud Longings cost him his Innocence. The Fault was so great and presumptuous, that it depriv'd him of his Paradise, and has left us, his benighted offspring, nothing but his Sin to inherit. The Sin that degraded

graded *Lucifer*, and turn'd him out of Heaven, was his Ambition of being like the most High. But instead of being so, and exalting his Throne above the stars of God, he was cast down to the infernal Lake. God indeed made him an Angel of Light, but it was his Ambition which gave him such a dismal Change as to make him a Devil. Through his means it has crept into the World, and like him too, *walks its rounds, seeking whom it may devour*. It seizeth upon all sorts of People, and with it there is no respect of Persons. The High and the Low, the Rich and the Poor are tainted with this very Sin. This Sin has eaten into their very Bowels, and interwoven it self, as it were, into their Natures. They are all aiming and grasping at this thing called Honour; whenas Honour is that which may advance them to their ruine. They will be climbing so high till they break their Necks, and are somewhat of kin to the unhappy *Sejanus*, whom the Satyrist thus points at :

—— *Nam qui nimios obtabat honores,
Et nimias poscebat opes, numerosa parabat
Excelsæ turris tabulata, unde altior esset
Casus, & impulse preceps in mane ruinæ.*

And

And he that would avoid *Sejanus* his down-fall, let him beware of *Sejanus* his Ambition. Honour is a sacred thing, consecrated for the service of Great and Able Persons, and not design'd for every creeping Sneakby, who shall be thrusting himself forward. Such an one should be made to stand off at a distance, lest he suffer a Punishment due to the sin of his approach. Honour is nice and curious, and will not be won by all that court it. It's high and lofty, and will not accept of a dunghil-Admirer. It's a thing of too great weight for the little and infirm to bear. If it should be thrown upon 'em, it would crush 'em to pieces. They are as able to bear the World upon their shoulders, as such a Burden. It would spoil 'em for ever; it elates their Minds, and sets 'em not only above others, but themselves too: And they have no other notion of Honour, but to Pride it, and to Domineer. To these ambitious, aspiring Upstarts, to these who are in such hot pursuits after Honour, that for the sake of it shall run here and there, and grudge if they are not satisfied, to these I say we ought to give the Advice of *St. Peter*, of *humbling themselves, that they may be exalted in due time* ;

time ; for Humility is the best and the surest step to Dignity. Let us but learn this short and easy lesson, and I don't doubt but we shall account these worldly promotions to be as nothing in the balance in respect of our Duty to God.

But though there be those who transgress against God, and dishonour him in nothing more than in their violent pursuits of Honour here ; yet God forbid that all should be of the same Hue and Complexion ; and though the Publick suffers when such as these are promoted, yet without all peradventure there are those so truly deserving as may embrace a worldly Honour without either breach of Modesty, or the Love of God. Such as these God raiseth up for the common Good. Men of huge Endowments of Mind, of good and honest Principles, that bravely answer the dignity of their Places by the worth of their Persons. These are continually darting forth their bright Rays, cherishing and enlivening the lower Orb with their kind and benign influences. And if with their Honour they are in a more high and peculiar manner related to Government, what People so happy as they who are under their Protection ! To these we come wing'd with deference ;

deference, to these we don't grudge to pay Obeisance, and yet not to the Honour, but the Men. For Persons dignify their Places, more than their Places can them. Such as these embrace their stations with evenness and calmness of Mind, and without the least tincture of Passion or Ambition. With a steadiness they hold their Stations; and rather than be Villains, with a steadiness can quit 'em too. These are truly our men of Honour. These (God be thanked) are sometimes exalted to high Places, yet they don't at all forget themselves, or deviate so far as to love the World in the sense of my Text.

Thus I have hinted upon the Three Considerations of my first Head, *viz.* Pleasure, Riches and Honour, and have endeavoured in some measure to shew how far they may be aim'd at and desir'd; and that they are to be affected and managed with a due proportion to the real and intrinsic worth they do bear, and no otherwise; that they ought not to take up our thoughts to that degree as to make us neglect our main Concern. Therefore if any one doth immoderately or inordinately love all or either of these things, we may pronounce him one of no Religion, a meer Atheist, and that's enough. And
this

this brings me to my 2^d and last Head, viz. the reason for this prohibition, The inconsistency of the Love of the World with the Love of God; *If any man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him.*

We may as well pretend to Reconcile things of the greatest distance; we may, as well call *East* and *West* together, bid Light and Darkness be in conjunction, and after that, to compleat the absurdity, perswade 'em to agree: we may, I say, as well imagine all this, as that a Worldling can be Religious.

There be many things whereby the Worldling shews he is of no Religion, but I shall speak of two things which do denote him of none, and they are his Unsteadiness, and his Insincerity in Duties of Religion.

First then, Unsteadiness demonstrates the Worldling to be of no Religion. There is nothing which the Gospel more punctually exhorts us to, than steadiness, and constancy, and perseverance in our Christian profession. Perseverance in our Religious concerns will teach us to withdraw our Love from the World. Thus doth St. Paul advise us, *Coloss. 3 2. to set our affection on things above, and not*

on things on the earth. It is the business of Christianity to crucify us to the World; we must be as Strangers in it, to converse awhile, and then away. But to fix our thoughts upon Dirt and Vanity, is the drift of a selfish, Atheistical Worldling. I call the Worldling an Atheist, and I think with propriety of speech I may so, for he Apostatizeth from God.

The Holy Scriptures give us many shrewd hints to this purpose, and would be able to convince the Worldling, was he not Reason-proof as well as Holy Inspiration. They admonish us to keep within compass of our Duty, and above all things whatsoever to regard the business of Religion, and the eternal welfare of our Souls. All earthly things must be subservient to this Main; like towardly Servants they must Obey, and not Usurp. For Religion is the Crown and Glory of our Nature. It's the means whereby we attain the great End for which we had our Being, and for nothing else. We eat and drink in order to Live, but we live that we may glorify our Creator. We may take our Pleasure, but then it must be purely to help our infirm Spirits, which will be apt to fail us if not refreshed with gentle Recreations. For
G they

they can't be always in right Tune for Duty, nor in due motion or vigour to attend it, without some easy relaxations and intermissions. We have Riches given us ; But to what end? Not to mis-use 'em sure, but that we may be rich in good works, and hence may they be said to profit the owner. We ascend up to Honour and great Places, but the purport is, that we should demean our selves with that Brightness and Integrity, as to Grace our Stations, and then may we be said to Honour our Maker. Would we all in our differencr Capacities observe these plain Rules, in some measure we might love the World, and yet not hurt our selves. Would we still observe this Main, what People could be more happy even in this Life than we? This World then would not brutalize us as it doth, for our Reason as well as our Religion would govern us in the use of it. The short is, if we had a real Love for the Father, we should admit of no rival or sharer with him, neither could any thing ballance Duty. 'Tis not the glittering of these little things here below that could enamour us, did we but look up to those which are more glorious. But if we will be importun'd and gloz'd through

through Vanity ; if we are toss'd about through the Hopes and Fears of these Sublunary Things , and upon that draw back from Duty , we betray our impotency and Cowardice, and are not fit Soldiers of Christ's Banner, or sound Members of his Church Militant. In the 8th Chapter of St. Luke , we find a Parable of the Sower, and it is said, as concerning the Seed , That some fell by the ways side, which was trodden down and devour'd by the fowls of the air ; some fell upon a rock, and wither'd away as soon as it sprang up ; some fell among thorns, and the thorns choaked it ; and other fell on good ground, and brought forth fruit an hundred fold. In the same Chapter we have the Explication of this Parable. The seed is the word of God ; those by the ways side are the hearers ; then cometh the Devil, and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. They on the rock are they which when they hear , receive the word with joy, and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns, are they which when they have heard, go forth and are choaked with the cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good

ground are they which in an honest and good heart having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

The Parable amounts to no more than this: Some when they heard the Word, were prone to believe, and for a season were well disposed towards God. But the things of this World made 'em quickly to forget themselves, and turn their Backs upon Duty. Thus it is with us: even the Voluptuous, the Covetous, the Ambitious, have (no doubt) had warm thoughts towards Religion, but this has been only a sudden fit, and has soon been over. Though for a time they may appear all Life and Wing towards God, yet so weak and heartless is their Belief, and of so tottering a foundation, that they cannot, they dare not stand the Test against these worldly temptations. For in the Parable (if you remember) though with joy they heard the Word, yet it came to nothing when sown upon fruitless ground: And this was that which made 'em fall away.

The Worldling is a disparagement sure to human kind: For by transforming himself upon occasion, he makes it his business to transcribe the nature of the Devil,

Devil, who can transform into a Saint as well as he. Piety in a Worldling is but a transforming qualification when the most is said, though in a Christian it deserves a better name. For he that will renounce his Religion, the interest of his Soul, upon a worldly temptation, Worships God but as the Devil will let him. Such an enmity there is between the love of this World and the love of the Father, such an irreconcilment between God and Mammon, such an absolute disagreement between these two Masters, that it is plain Nonsense, or a contradiction, to say we are of any Religion, as long as we are so enamoured with the things of this World, as to let Conscience stoop and truckle to 'em.

2. Insincerity shews the Worldling to be of no Religion. If you find any Sincerity in him, chronicle it as a wonder. Sincerity is the very Quintessence of all our Religious performances, without it they are nothing. 'Tis this which gives 'em Life and Worth. 'Twas this which made St. Paul pronounce so confidently of himself and others, as we find, 2 Cor. 1. 12. where he says, *our rejoycing is this, the testimony of a good conscience, that*

in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world. Let this be a standing-Sample for us, let this be our Rule. But when all this is said, it may reasonably be asked how we know a sincere person? Thus, particularly as to Devotion: A man may be only outwardly Religious, and his Heart may give his Tongue the Lie. He may be Pious upon Design, and Devout in order to Deceive: But this is out of our reach to know; besides, it's a breach of Charity not to believe the best in this Case. For the Man's Hands and Eyes too are lifted up to Heaven, he Sighs and Groans, and is behind none in form and shew, and if the Saint thus fairly appear, ought not we believe him True, for we cannot dive into his Heart? I Answer, Such a one may possibly, nay, is oftentimes the greatest of Hypocrites; and consequently no man living is to be relied upon from his meer outside, in this respect, or any other relating to Sincerity. But there is one infallible Criterion whereby we may judge of him, and solves the Question, *viz. his Life.* For *do we gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Can a corrupt tree bring forth*
good

good fruit? Doth an evil Man produce Good and Virtuous deeds? Can a selfish Worldling be really Pious, Honest and Sincere? No assuredly: And let his pretensions be what they will, we shall find him at bottom to be nothing but delusion. Thus to see him who was just now Praying to God to deliver him from the Deceits of the World, the Flesh and the Devil, playing the wanton, and debauching himself the first opportunity which offers it self: what can we think of such an one? Another is lifting up his Hands to Almighty God to protect him from the Sins of Avarice, Rapine, and Uncharitableness, yet soon forgets himself, and is a Slanderer, Unjust, an Extortioner. What a riddle of iniquity is this? Once more; To see him who was to day presenting himself before the Throne of Grace, with all the Protestations of Humility and Unworthiness, styling himself vile Creature, Dust and Ashes, a Worm and no Man, and the like; to see this very person forgetting himself, and with all the Pride and Ambition that can be thought of, riding at Honour, and trampling upon the Neck of a poor weak Brother: what a Paradox is this in Christianity? In short, were we

to run through the whole scheme of Religious Duties, we shall find such a cursed leaven of insincerity in some mens actions, that it spoils the whole of their Christianity. But to give two more Instances. Take that of Alms-giving and the Lord's Supper. Alms-giving is a brave and Heavenly Virtue, that as loudly speaks a man a Christian as any whatsoever, provided it be done with Candor and Sincerity; but if it be link'd with Vain-glory and Ostentation, or, if we give on purpose to be seen of Men, we strangely alter the circumstance, even so far, that Duty by this means is turn'd into Sin. My other instance is that of receiving the Lord's Supper. If we do it with simplicity of Heart, and pious resolution of amendment, we receive ineffable comfort thereby. But if we unworthily presume to come there; if upon any by-ends we presume to eat of that Bread and drink of that Cup, we forget our Errand, and shall be in as comfortless a condition as he that had not on his Wedding-Garment. Thus we may in some measure see that sincerity is a necessary ingredient in Christianity, for without this it's but an empty name, and evaporates into Clamor and a Noise. Let not
then

then the Worldling, the cunning, yet as to the main the silly Worldling, be flusht with the thoughts of deluding God as he doth Man: For he doth but mock himself if he thinks God can be so. Let him know, that without this very sincerity, *neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor Uncircumcision*; it matters not what he is in shew, since at bottom he is nothing but Hypocrisy. Therefore, let him correct himself speedily, and not love this World so as to despise another, but rather let him prefer God and his Soul before all Earthly things, and this shall stand him in more stead than whole Burnt-Offerings and Sacrifices. Having done with my two chief Heads laid down, to wit, the Prohibition it self, and the reason for that Prohibition, and having made some small attempt to shew how far the love of this World may suit with Religion, and how far it destroys it; I shall speak two or three Words more, and I'll have done.

Since these things Sublunary are objects that are no ways answerable to the worth and greatness of our Rational Souls, and we must look higher, or we degenerate and sink below our selves; Therefore if we must be exercising this Passion of
Love,

Love, let us bestow it upon those things that are more deserving. Let it not be sensual, mean, and beggarly, but high and rational. Let it be such a Love that shall correspond with our Manly Faculties, and keep pace with our Reason; or, to speak a Word more comprehensive than this, Let it be a love of the Father, and not that of the World. And this will be nothing but the Antepast of Heaven; for we Love him, we Praise him, we Adore him now, that we may Love, Praise and Adore him for ever. By this Love we shall at last arrive to those Pleasures which shall save our Longings, and, what is more, satisfy 'em too; to pleasures infinite, ineffable, inexhaustible. This Love shall prompt us to covet those Riches which are suitable to our largest and noblest Capacity, to Riches that are really Substantial, and such as shall make us so too. This Love invites us to be Ambitious, for it consecrates Ambition it self. And this is that climbing which becomes a right aspiring Soul. Let us then push on and aim at nothing less than Heaven; and since that Kingdom suffers violence, let us take it by the violence of our good and virtuous actions, that we may be
partakers

partakers there with good and just Men made perfect, and have some portion of Eternal Inheritance with the Angels our elder Brothers. This, this shall be our reward for loving the Father, we shall enjoy a Brightness and Tranquility of Mind here, and after that be advanc'd to Eternal Glory.

To which that we may all arrive, God of his infinite Mercy grant for his dear Son's sake Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory now and for ever. Amen.

M A T.

M A T. VII. 5.

Thou Hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote of thy brother's eye.

THE Text is a full and conclusive admonition from the Words preceding; importing the grand presumption of any man in daring to reprehend his Neighbour, whenas he himself is most blameworthy. I need not Paraphrase upon the allusion of the Words, by reason they are so plain and obvious to the meanest capacity, to sound the drift and meaning of 'em. They are a comparison between two pieces of Wood of a very different size. A Beam, rendred by the Greek is δοκός, and may be the longest and thickest piece of wood which is commonly used for Building. But the κέρας, Mote, is a small splinter or shiver, and between these two there is a very vast difference. The Words then can't run Literally, but Figuratively. We will allow

low a Mote to be literally and actually in the Eye, but that a Beam should be so, would be strange. Therefore we must admit of the hyperbolizing way of expression, and then the allusion holds good thus, and amounts to no more than if our Saviour had said: " Friend, who-
" soever thou art, don't be so intolle-
" rably Impudent, Pert, and Pragmatical,
" as to offer at rebuking thy Neighbour
" for his Crimes, by reason that thou
" hast more Scandalous to be first amend-
" ed in thy self; as much greater in
" size and bulk in a Moral Sense, as
" there is between the dimensions of
" a Beam and a Mote in a Natural.
" Therefore bethink thy self; either
" cast out thine own Beam, or let thy
" Brother's Mote alone; for by thus
" rebuking thy Brother, thou do'st but
" expose thy self to scorn and contempt,
" and thy devillish Hypocrisy will ra-
" ther confirm him in his Impiety, than
" reduce him to Virtue. The Words
of the Text are our Saviour's in his glo-
rious Sermon upon the Mount. After
a great part of his most powerful Dis-
course, he forbids his Disciples the Sin
of rash judgment, or censoriousness to-
wards one another. A Sin which he
found

found very rife among the *Jews*, especially among a particular and peculiar Sect of 'em, the *Pharisees*. They were, as we find in the Character given of them in Holy Scripture, the most Proud and Avaricious of any of the *Jews*, and yet outwardly who more Humble and Charitable than they? they were mighty prone to censure others of the least Misdemeanours; very prying, curious and nice as to their Neighbours carriage. They could see their Faults with half an eye, and when seen could condemn as quickly. Little Faults appeared great, but the greatest and most enormous of theirs were as nothing and overlooked. Not to wash before Dinner was with these outsidcs of Religion, a crime scarce to be pardon'd; but to insult over or trample upon a Brother, or devour a poor Widow, by way of Extortion upon a Religious pretence, was consistent with their Consciences. They were very scrupulous in the Tything Mint and Cummin, but left Judgment and Mercy, those weightier Matters of the Law undone. They thought that their fiery Zeal for a few little matters should commute for the whole substance of Religion. But if we will believe our Saviour in my Text, we shall find

find a better Doctrine than those Saints ever taught the World. A Doctrine that comes cloathed with the greatest advantages which can be offer'd; a Doctrine that gives us the happinets of both Worlds, for it purifies us here, and Crowns us hereafter. Judge not, says the beginning of this Capter, *that ye be not judged*; that is, observe not other Peoples Words and Actions too severely and without mercy, lest ye are plagued with the same impertinency that ye have shewed them: Lest you suffer from 'em here, and likewise hereafter receive the Punishment due to your unmerciful Judgment. With what confidence can any one look severely on others failings, who has blacker Crimes to be first amended before he presumes upon the great and charitable work of Chastising? For let that man know, whosoever he be, that if he will command Credit and Authority, he shall do it only by his Honesty. Our Saviour doth here charge men of that great and foul Sin of Hypocrisy, in that they would undertake to reform others of their bad Lives and Conversations without due inspecting themselves. This inspection would have made 'em fit and impartial Monitors, and would have given

ven Life to a sound and wholesome Admonition, and have either perswaded or sham'd a Sinner into Reformation. An admonition from such an one would come with Candor and Ingenuity ; obligations (I should think) not easily to be resisted. But Sincerity in a *Jew* was a rarity, and in a *Pharisee* a Contradiction. For to be Hypocritical and to be Pharisaical are with us become terms Synonimous. *Josephus* in the third Chapter of his 17th Book decyphers these *Pharisees*, where he says, Amongst the *Jews* there were a sect of People called *Pharisees*, who were too much addicted to Self-opinion, and boasted themselves to be the most exact observers of the Law in all the Countrey: These were such as durst oppose themselves against Kings, full of fraud, arrogancy and rebellion, presuming to raise War upon their own Motions, and to Rebel and Offend their Princes at their own Pleasure. Thus *Josephus*. These were they that separated themselves from others, for they pretended to an extraordinary sanctity of Life above other Men. Witness that great example of Hypocrisy in St. Luke 18. 11. *God I thank thee* (says the *Pharisee*) *I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers,*

ers, or even as this *Publican*. When as the *Publican*, as vile as he was in this man's thoughts, was in the sight of God prefer'd before him. The Injustice and Extortion sure might have been left out of the *Pharisee's* Thanksgiving, and happy had it been for him if Humility had been his Exaltation.

But *thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.*

In speaking to these Words, I shall lay down Three Propositions.

1. That it's Presumptuous and Absurd to think of Reforming others without a due inspecting our selves: Therefore *first cast out the beam out of thine own eye.*

2. That those Presumptuous People who are so prying into other Men, have not only Faults to be amended in themselves, but for the generality are the most faulty: And how wilt thou say to thy Brother, *Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye?*

3dly and lastly, That a due inspecting our selves is the best means to Reform our selves, and others. *First cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then thou shalt see clearly to cast out the mote that is in thy brether's eye.*

H

Hypo-

Hypocrisy was cashier'd by men of any Principles of Honesty even in the Heathen World. For they who were known to be guilty of that Sin, had but slender Credit amongst 'em. He that will be the best proficient in Impiety, must take care that it doth not blaze out in the World, but must colour it over with some shew of Piety and Sincerity. And though the Saintship without, can't cast out the Devil within, yet it may serve to hide him; for as he is the Prince of Darknes, so he is true to himself, and teaches the works of Darknes too. Beauty needs no varnish to set it off, but Deformity doth. A gloss, or an empty shew, may speak us fair in man's Eye, though it will not make us accepted with God and our own Consciences. We may be for fingering the Mote in our Brother's Eye, but if we let our own Beam alone, we do, instead of justifying, put a trick upon our selves. He that shall prove himself a fit and able Reformer, must do it by an hearty endeavour to Extirpate any sort of Vice that harbours within his own Breast. A rigorous Exaction in smaller matters of duty, shall never make atonement for the commission of greater Sins. For if this would do, I suppose none would incur eternal Dam-

Damnation. For I verily think, no wretch in the world so loose and profligate, but has some seeds of Morality in him; none so hellishly wicked, but has sometimes been well affected, and has done some good Deed. For never to have done a Good Deed, is such an height of impiety, that even the Devil himself doth not require of us. He shall allow us to do some works of Piety and Charity too, provided we are his Servants in the main. Let us but keep to our selves Sins of the largest size, and he shall not only permit, but out of artifice and cunning, prompt us to throw away the smaller. Keep the Beam that is in thine own Eye, and if thou castest out the Mote that is in thy Brother's, thou art guilty of a piece of Charity which our Saviour requires not at thy hands, for by so doing thou lovest thy Neighbour better than thy self. For though I'll own that Hypocrisy, as such, will never convert a Sinner from the evil of his way, yet when it lies undiscovered, it may do mighty things. For Hypocrisy undiscovered comes in the appearance of Sincerity; and Sincerity, you know, is very Charming and Alluring, and doth oftentimes save a Man in spite of of himself. An Hypocrite (tis possible)

has done more good than he design'd or was aware of. For tampering with a neighbourly way of Rebuke, though not aim'd by the Hypocrite to convince him of his Sins, but to conceal his own; yet as long as this vile intent lies couch'd under disguise, and is undiscern'd, it has work'd a good end, and diverted a Sinner from his Evil course. And if a Sinner be converted and put into a state of Grace by the wholesome admonitions of an Hypocrite (though not through his Hypocrisy, for that can't be) he is as happy in his Conversion as if he had ow'd it to an Archangel from Heaven. For I would have the Sinner know, that in the upshot, he was converted purely through the Grace of God; and as that was the sovereign remedy of his Disease, he may rest contented, for it matters not what was the conveyance. Though God's dispensations are various, and his ways past finding out, yet still let this suffice us, *viz. that he is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.*

Our Saviour doth here suppose, that the cleansing our selves, is the best means to make others clean, and that it's in vain to think of doing so, without looking at home, and there severely correct
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whatever we find amiss. And for a further Illustration of this, I lay down this Proposition, to wit, That he who is guilty of as bad or worse Faults than what he is to correct and amend in others, can't be presum'd so well qualifi'd to reform, as he that is innocent. And this shall appear upon the account of Two Things, as being the effects of this his Guilt.

1. His want of Courage. 2^{dly} his want of Uniformity in matters of Religion.

1. His want of Courage in matters of Religion, makes him not so well qualified for such a work as he that is Innocent. Nothing makes a Man speak and act with greater Majesty and Assurance, and sooner compels us to the observance of our Duty, than Innocency join'd with Sincerity, which in this case is the greatest Authority a man can have. For without this, let a Man be in never so high Place and Dignity, and he shall sneak and become Contemptible. His Admonitions shall be very faint and low, who is Conscious of his own Immorality and Baseness. He may brave it over Inferiors with Pride and Ostentation, yet he shall not check Vice with that Courage and Boldness,

ness, as he that for the constant Tenour of his Life has demean'd himself with Innocency and Discretion. *The righteous is as bold as a lion*, says the Wise Man, *Prov. 28. 1.* He fears no Dangers when they come to oppose Duty, but with a Strength and Magnanimity becoming himself, he Encounters 'em all ; resolves on the worst of Conflicts, ay, Death it self with it's utmost Terrours, rather than he will quit a good Conscience, and not perform his Duty. His Righteousness is his defence, and makes him Stronger as well as Wiser than his Enemies, and by imitating him who was eminent for Courage as well as Wisdom, *he will not fear what man can do unto him.* He is a man for Adversity as well as Prosperity, and is as fit to stand before Kings, as mean Men : And all this either in a Publick or a Private capacity. For in both these he is careful to think, speak, and do what is Honest. How Graceful is his Person ! How Powerful his Admonitions ! His Wisdom and his Courage put a Lustre upon him, and render him Precious and Amiable in the sight of God and Man. His Conscience bears him witness of his Uprightness and Integrity. It can with chearfulness and confidence tell him, that he has not prevaricated
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with God, and shifted off Obedience at that time, which required him to be most Active or Passive either, but has still acted most consonantly to himself, and made it his business to be a Christian Uniform. This, this is the Man that with confidence may administer help to the Distressed in their different Necessities, and may be supposed to cure others, because he has healed himself, or, (which is better) has preserv'd himself from the Disease, and by that has prevented the need of a Cure. Thus the Innocent, or he that is not guilty of as bad or worse Faults than what he is to Correct and Amend in others.

But let us take a view of him who is Guilty, and see how he dares offer at such a noble, such a charitable Work. It is not the serving God in a preposterous manner, or shuffling, cutting, and picking out those Precepts of Duty which he fondly thinks shall serve his turn, and in spite of Scripture will contradict that Text of Scripture of Reconciling the contradiction of serving God and the Devil; it is not this that shall warrant him any mighty Reformer of others, whenas a severe reformation of his Hypocritical Self is the only thing he wants. Want of Courage in a Christian is a thing of a

dangerous consequence ; for this shall so dispirit him upon any Turn, that he will be at a loss how to demean himself under fiery Trials and Afflictions. Let this piece-meal Christian be in any Storm, and he shall be the sport of every Wind and Wave. Every evil Accident which besets him, shall so ruffle and discompose him, that he shall not be able to surmount the smallest hazards that shall threaten him ; and rather than like a Man bravely withstand the disturbances of this World, he shall throw away his greatest Concerns of another. He is of so weak and feeble Mind, of such a mean and dastardly Spirit, that he cannot endure the least air of Evil to blow upon him ; and what will be but a diversion to a courageous Soul, troubles and discomposeth him. He Faints and Sinks under the smallest pressures ; and though our Saviour's Yoke is easy, and his Burthen light, yet he shall contradict the Text by a Pusillanimous rejecting the Precept.

2. His want of Uniformity in matters of Religion, makes him not so well qualified for the work of Reforming, as he that is Innocent.

It's well worth our Pains to observe how confidently and precariously we are apt
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to pronounce our selves Christians ; the Christian Religion is our chief Concern in this Life, and the Church-Militant here, is but to prove us for the Church-Triumphant hereafter. But wherein this Christianity doth consist, or when we may be said to be Christians here, we are at a stand, this is the point to be found out. Some will not allow themselves the name of Christians, unless they tread the Steps of their Blessed Master with all the Care and Industry imaginable, and are willing to follow him through all the troublesome and difficult Stages of this Life, and shall think it their greatest glory to suffer for his Sake, rather than comply with Sin, or the desires of sinful Men, offend this their Master. But others fancy they may be Christians at easier rates, and shall bring our Saviour in subjection to them, when a perverse, stubborn Will shall not let them Obey. They are willing to pay somewhat to the Commands of God, which so earnestly call for their Obedience ; but then you must give 'em leave to pick and chuse what suits best with their Humours, for they are too Wise to take the whole Gospel at the bulk. If this will please God, it pleaseth them, and they will be
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Christians upon these terms, and no other. Take an Instance or Two. One Man keeps to the Rules of Temperance, and abstains from Drunkenness, Gluttony, or Wantonness, or any other Vice that directly thwarts that great Virtue. But this Temperate man transgresseth against the Rules of Charity and Justice. And are not Charity and Justice as much commanded by God as Temperance? certainly they are: Therefore let not the Hypocrite delude himself, by thinking to put God off with such a pitiful, such a broken Obedience. Once more, and let this suffice for Illustration. A man is Sober, Chaste and Temperate, but is withal most intolerably Proud, Ill-natur'd and Uncharitable; but Pride, Ill-nature, and Uncharitableness, shall weigh down all his other Virtues, and as effectually sink him to Hell, as if he had actually transgressed all the Commands of God. He then that will be a Christian, let him take care to be an Uniform one. And let not any one think that the Gospel has shone upon him to any effect, till he has thus prov'd himself. Let him have an eye upon that Text of St. James, Chap. 2. v. 10. *Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.*

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The Words (though we were to set aside the inspiration of 'em) seem to me to be founded upon the greatest Reason that possibly can be. For if Obedience to God be the basis of all our Virtuous Actions, why should not our Obedience be entire and universal? For God has commanded us nothing beyond our Power to do. Why then should it be so broken and maim'd, as generally it is? God forbids all Vices equally; he commands one Virtue as well as another, and with him there is no manner of Exception. Therefore (one would think) if we were Virtuous purely for God's sake, or through Obedience to his Commands, we would shew this our reasonable Service by a perfect and entire subjection to all his Laws; we should abominate every Vice as prohibited, and embrace every Virtue as commanded by him. And this would be the meaning of *Loving the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul, and with all our strength.* This may well be called our reasonable Service, because by obeying and loving God, we love our selves to the utmost, that is, we benefit our selves, for no benefit redounds to God by our keeping his Statutes, all the profit is to our selves.

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But if I have thrown my self out of God's Favour by my disobedience, it matters not whether I have done this by one continual habitual Sin, or by many. For any one wilful Sin unrepented of, is damnable: therefore if I am forsaken of God upon the account of one habitual Sin, I am equally miserable, equally forlorn, as if I had transgress'd all his Commands. Let us then entirely conform our selves to God's Laws, lest we mock and abuse our selves. Lest Conscience, that terrible Witness rise up against us another day, which though we would not suffer it to have its due course of chastising here, yet it shall be sure to have its course in a severe punishing hereafter; it shall leave us to the eternal wrath of God without shelter, without excuse, and makes us wish that we had been Christians Uniform, or had not been at all. And let this serve for the First thing laid down, *viz.* That it is presumptuous and absurd to think of Reforming others, without a due inspecting our selves. He that fails in this, let any one judge what mighty things in all likelihood he is able to do by way of Reforming a Brother. Yet notwithstanding the greatest unlikelihood, or rather absurdity, he shall still be presuming upon
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this great Office; which brings me to my second Proposition, *viz.* That those Presumptuous People who are so prying into other Men, have not only Faults to be amended in themselves, but for the generality are the most faulty.

There must be a special care taken by us, before we can be effectual in our Admonitions. It must be a fervent and a charitable Zeal that must help a poor weak brother fallen into a snare; an hearty and a burning Love that shall prevail to divert him from his evil Course, and reduce him to a Christian State and Condition. In a word, it must be the advice of a Good and Holy Man that shall do such a great Work, or, as the Apostle says, Rom. 15. 14. *A man full of goodness and filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish another.* So that he who is to be capacitated for such a work, must, according to St. Paul, be an honest, wise, well-meaning Man, (for such do his words import) a man of generosity of temper, meekness, patience, and the like. To this purpose the same Apostle gives us directions, Gal. 6. 1. *Brethren, if any man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thy self lest thou also*

so be tempted : And v. 2. *Bear ye one anothers burden* ; v. 3. *If any man think he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself* in his imagination, *ἑαυτὸν φρεναπατά*, he errs in Mind, and deceives himself as concerning himself. These Words of the Apostle do hint to us, that in his days there were a base, impudent, and impertinent sort of People, that would ever and anon be calling their Neighbours to an account for Misdemeanours committed, though they were not only conscious to themselves of their own baseness and rascality (for they that are Villains must know themselves to be such) but were notorious for it to the World also. They had neither more common Honour or Honesty than their Neighbours, that is, they were nothing in respect of Men, though they would fain have been thought so ; and these high Thoughts of themselves and their own worth, taught 'em to be pragmatistical. And in this sense, *every fool will be meddling*, Prov. 20. 3.

The *Sadducees*, who were a jeering sort of People, were infamous for their unmannerly dealings with our Saviour, though he taught 'em with Power and Authority ; with that Power and Authority as to make 'em astonish'd at his Doctrine
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and he would have made 'em asham'd of theirs, had not ignorance, pride, and ill-nature intercepted them and the Light. For amongst the *Jews*, Who greater Infidels, who more harden'd against our Saviour's Doctrine, than the *Sadducees* and *Pharisees*, who were so blinded with Self-opinion as to make 'em proof against all conviction? In *Acts* 17. 4. We find that when St. *Paul* disputed with the *Jews* at *Thessalonica*, the better sort among 'em did believe and adhere to his Doctrine, and also of the *Grecians that feared God*, a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few; that is, those of his Auditors, whether Men or Women, that had most understanding and Integrity, and such as were worthy a *Paul* to speak to, were won over, became his Profelytes. But v. 5. we read, that those who would not believe, were such as were moved with envy; took unto themselves certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and when they had gathered a company, they made a tumult and uproar in the city. And this was the consequence of endeavouring to persuade a sottish, ill-natur'd, malicious Rabble out of their Rascality, who thought themselves to be too Wise to be convinc'd, and too Good to be made better. In a word, look over the whole

whole Gospel, and you shall find, that those who are most quick at spying, most pert and pragmatikal at censuring, and most severe in punishing slighter crimes, were *Sadducees, Scribes and Pharisees*, and others that were the basest, proudest, and most harden'd Sinners. But to return to our selves : Let us look abroad, and we shall find this sin of Censuring very reigning, very insulting. And this will appear upon Two Accounts. 1. Upon a Natural. 2^{dly}, Upon a Religious Account : And in both these Respects we shall find Men very full of themselves.

1. Upon a Natural Account. He that has the least Endowments of Mind, is generally the most censorious of others for their Defects. But Pride is a fascinating Sin, and doth strangely exalt us above our selves. It magnifies every thing of our own at a huge rate ; the least Mote of Wisdom shoots out into a Beam through this Perspective.

And this we find verified in some persons, in respect even of Bodily Endowments. Thus inactivity of body by the strength of a strange fancy becomes liveliness and briskness of Spirits ; weakness shall be thought strength, and a wonderful deformity shall appear Beauty. When-

as they, in reality, are at a vast distance from such bodily endowments aforesaid; or, to speak in the phrase of my Text, at as much distance as there is between a Mote and a Beam; and yet so besotted are some with those fained endowments, that they shall despise others for not having as good a proportion of body in reality and actual existence as they have in their own Eyes, which is indeed a despising another for want of that which they themselves have not, and is as ridiculous as impious. 'Tis true, I can't avoid my deformity of body, but I can avoid a worse, and not be in love with my deform'd self. But suppose any man had these bodily endowments, yet they ought not to make him contemn his fellow-creature that has 'em not, because they stand but upon a fickle point, and ought not (one would think) to make him arrogant: A fall or a blow may spoil his agile faculty; hunger and famine may impair his strength; and sickness may make his beauty to consume away. Or, though the agile, the strong, and the beautiful may by good luck escape these violent accidents, yet Death shall be sure to seize this haughty creature, and quickly lay him as it is appointed for him,

Earth to Earth, Ashes to Ashes. To value self therefore, and to undervalue his neighbour upon the account of these things which stand upon so sandy a bottom, is equally irrational, as if he had 'em not. The endowment of Mind I take to be quickness or vivacity of Wit, and solidity of Reason, and these two I do imagine to serve the great ends of Mankind; but here also we shall find that those who have the least share, are the most censorious of others for their defects. For who, generally speaking, is more conceited than your half-witted person? They say every Bird dotes upon its own Nest, and so doth every Fool upon himself. Wit of it self, I'll own, is a graceful ornament to any man; for let him be of what Quality or Station, Age or Degree he will, it serves for great and glorious ends. It brightens the whole Man, it puts a lustre upon his person, it carries deference and respect wherever it appears. But then care must be taken that it be rightly and duly manag'd, and, that it may be so, wisdom must accompany it to help and direct it, to guard and keep it from flying at random, and being outrageous. It is Wisdom that must make it observe its due time and season, and
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not suffer it to break out into Impertinency and Immodesty. But a Man may ask how Wisdom should do this, whenas it's certain that Wise Men are oftentimes the most Proud and Pragmatical? To this I answer. Men of great Parts and Learning are oftentimes very Proud; but then I deny that this Pride of theirs, is a certain, direct and immediate consequence of their Parts, Learning, or that which we call speculative Wisdom. Far be it from us to think so. For if so, then a Man must be Proud as he is Learned, and the most Learned would always be the most Proud. But this is false; Therefore if ever you see great Parts and Pride in conjunction, you must conclude that the Pride (if I may so Metaphysically abstract) belongs not to the Learning, but the Man: For had such an one not the tenth part of it which he has, he would have been as Proud as now he is. Now Wisdom I consider as it respects speculation; and that it doth not of it self make Man Proud, let us rest assured from the Wisdom of him who was the Wisest of Men. He says, *Eccles. 1. 18. In much wisdom there is much grief, and he that encreaseth knowledge encreaseth sorrow.* And in the same Chapter, *I have given mine*
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heart (says he) to search and find out wisdom by all things that are done under Heaven: This sore travel has God given to the sons of men to humble them therewith. I have seen all the works that are done under the Sun, and behold all is vanity and vexation of Spirit. Sure then Grief and Sorrow, sore Travel, Vanity and Vexation of Spirit, are not things to make Man Haughty, but might, one would think, make him Humble and Lowly in his own Eyes; admire the Almighty Power of God, and bemoan his own weakness; look down upon himself with anguish and fear, in that after all his toil and great searches into the secrets of Nature, he finds himself in a maze and labyrinth of difficulties and errors, is at best but wandring and hovering, and knows not where to set his foot.

The consideration of these things should mortify our thoughts; yet notwithstanding all this, Vain Man would fain be wise; and the vanity indeed is this, that he is so only in his own conceit. Would every singular and individual person look nicely into himself, instead of looking so into other men, he would quickly know himself too, and after all his enquiries would confess with the Philosopher, that he is ignorant, and knows nothing. The short

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is, a Man may think as highly of himself for his Ability as he pleaseth, he may as proudly and pertly censure others for their defects, and yet be no better than *Solomon's Sluggard, who is wiser in his own conceit than seven men who can render a reason.* I might give many instances to confirm what I have been speaking, but they would be as so many supernumerary proofs to the thing in hand. For let any one but consult daily occurrences; let him either run to experience, or dive into speculation, and he shall find that Wisdom and Humility go hand in hand, but Pride and Censoriousness are the first-born of Ignorance and Folly. Thus upon the natural account, I proceed to shew, that those presumptuous Men who are most prying into others, are (generally speaking) the most faulty upon a Religious account. To give you the whole of Religion as comprehensively and as compendiously as I can, is the living Soberly, Righteously and Godly, Now we shall find that those who transgress these Rules most, are most prone to censure others for the breach of 'em. To begin with Sobriety. Sobriety is twofold, that of the Body, and that of the Soul. I shall just speak of 'em both;

When I say a Man must be Sober as to Body or Mind, I mean he must be severely so, and without exception. For abstaining from one Sin, shall not atone for the committing of another. But sure some are apt to think so; otherwise how durst any one so presumptuously charge his Neighbour with the breach of this or that Duty, whenas he himself is guilty of the same or worse? To these we may rightly apply the Text of the Apostle, *Rom. 2. 21. Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thy self? Ex. gr.* Let a man be abstemious in Drink, and he shall think himself a sober Man, tho, 'tis possible, he is as far from being so, as Drunkenness is from being a Vertue. Thus shall the Gluttonous, wanton Man inveigh against his Neighbour overtaken with the Bottle, styling him with the most vilifying names that can be thought of. Is not such an one a Sor, a Nuisance, a Swine? yes he is. But not a worse than thy Gluttonous Wanton self, for thou art a Swine and a Goat too. The sobriety of the Soul is the right governing its Passions. I shall give one instance here too, and let that suffice: And that is in the case of transient Anger, or a sudden Passion of the Mind, compared

to virulent Hatred or Malice. He that is subject to the former of these, shall without mercy be condemn'd as Immoral in not restraining his unruly Appetites, but suffering 'em to run out into disorder and exorbitancy, contrary to the spirit of Meekness, Courtesy and Affability. But he that judges and condemns him, treasures up a long and inveterate malice, and although he seems outwardly to bridle himself, yet he is continually plotting and contriving against his Brother: And *manet altâ mente repostum*, a devillish intent to do mischief; or, that I may speak more effectually, let me do it in the words of the Wise Man, *Prov. 26. 24, 25. He that hateth, dissembleth with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him: When he speaketh fair, believe him not, for there are seven abominations in his heart.* Seven Abominations, says he! there may be Seventy-times Seven for ought that any one knows, therefore of such an Angry Man have a care. A Passionate Man I'll own is faulty, but an Envious, Malicious Man is much more so. He so far transcribes after the Devil in his ugly revengeful humour, that he shall be sure to devour, if his power doth equalize his malice.

Let us consider Justice, and we shall find the Unjust are commonly the most pragmatistical and censorious. The *Pharisee's* giving Tythe of all that he possess'd, had been a good deed, had not the injustice of devouring Widows houses spoil'd the whole Action. His Fasting twice a week might have done him considerable service, had he not been pamper'd with Pride and Vain-glory, which quite alter'd the Circumstance. Had his Thanksgiving also, *viz.* That *he was not as other men, unjust, extortioners, &c.* been true, and in private, it would have been but a grateful acknowledgement of God's bountiful Grace towards him ; but as all this was false, vain-glorious, and insulting too, it provok'd God to chastise him for his untoward Piety, and humble him who so highly and arrogantly exalted himself.

Justice teaches us to do no Injury to any one, and to render to every one his due, and in these general acceptations I consider it. But here we shall find, that those who most transgress this Duty, are the quickest-sighted at spying out other Men. For instance : Let but a known Cheat be over-reach'd by his Neighbour in a bargain of a smaller Circumstance, by way of Commerce, and he shall think
nothing

nothing bad enough for him who has done him the injury, and shall be sure to requite him if he can; whenas this very Person who fancies himself so much wrong'd, has rais'd his Fortune purely by the art of Cheating and Extorting.

Again, a man is reckon'd (and is without all peradventure) Unjust, that doth not give every one his due, or, to speak in other Words, that doth not pay his Debts; for by this, he breaks that standing Rule of doing as he would be done unto. But yet, if to quit scores with his Creditor, he wades through Lying, Thieving, Perjury, and the foulest Enormities, he is far from quitting scores with God, but is still Unjust: And a man had better be a Debtor and a Beggar too, than such an unworthy Pay-Master as he.

Godliness in its utmost Latitude comprehends the whole Scheme of Duty, but in a limited sense signifies our immediate approach to God by Divine Worship, which we stile Devotion. Men may be real and sincere in their Religious intercourses with God; their Hearts and Tongues go together, and they really are what they seem to be, to wit, true Devotees. But these Good and Pious Men shall

shall be censur'd by the Ungodly and Profane, and deem'd Hypocrites by those that are Atheists. Others on the contrary, are Hypocrites and Dissemblers; they shall carry a strict and severe brow, and be critically pious in surface, and if others will not square with their outward deportment, they shall be condemn'd as Reprobate and Irreligious. If others have not those strange and sudden movements, those Extasies and Raptures which carry in the Forehead a semblance of Sanctity, they are thought no darlings of God, or Favourites of Heaven : But when all is said, these People (whatsoever Saints of another order may call 'em) make a conscience of squaring their Actions with the Laws of God, and are in a better state of Grace than themselves, notwithstanding their mighty pretences ; and though these Hypocrites can look down upon others with such scornful compassion, I do verily think if others Righteousness doth not exceed theirs, they will come far short of the Kingdom of Heaven. An Hypocrite in Devotion, shall personate the Saint with such Grace and Cunning, that it would be hard to disprove him, did not his Actions speak him a Liar, and display his Hypocrisy to the face

face of the World. For let him know, that neither Pride nor Uncharitableness are consistent with real Godliness.

I have mention'd the three Duties of Religion. In each of these I have hinted how those People who have the least share, are generally the most censorious. I mention'd but few instances, which I hope may suffice instead of more. I am come to my third and last Proposition, viz. That a due inspecting our selves is the best means to reform our selves and others.

Common Morality shall teach us thus much. Horace in the third Satyr of his First Book, reflects upon this cursed sort of Impertinency in some Men, in spying others Misdemeanours, and forgetting their own. The Satyrist is very neat and elegant, and considerable in his rebuke by way of Metaphor; where he says, *Stultus & improbus hic amor est dignusque notari; cum tua pervideas oculis, &c.* and lasheth those eagle-ey'd, pragmatical Creatures who were so nimble at reprehending others, though they themselves were the most blame-worthy. Thus down along the ingenious Poet in his jeering Wit gives 'em good advice couch'd in a Metaphor, to avoid this unfair dealing of theirs.

theirs. *Denique teipsum concute, num qua tibi vitiorum in se verit olim natura, aut consuetudo mala. Concute teipsum!* a pretty allusion to a man's shaking himself. If any thing clings to him or any thing about him which he dislikes or doth not approve of, he shakes it off; whether it be Water, or Dirt, or Lice, or any other thing else, he endeavours to get rid of the Nuisance. Thus if every singular and individual man would endeavour *concute-re seipsum*, to shake off his own rascality, and old habituated custom of sinning, I fancy he would not be so pert at handling other Folks. The Sot would then begin to understand that it is very reasonable, first to cast out his own Beam, before that of his Brother's Mote. But to go on with *Horace*: He runs on with another Allusion, and doth in an excellent manner shew how strangely ill-nature shall exert it self. Malice and Envy shall so hood-wink us, that we shall misconstrue every thing which looks like Virtue. Vice shall be cover'd over with a specious pretence, whenas Virtue shall be hooted at by these Apes, who, if they can but be upon the reverse with the wise and sober part of the World, they set up for Wits, and presently commence great men in their own

own Thoughts, though as far from being so, as the Devil himself is from an Angel of Light.

At virtutes ispas invertimus (says Horace) *atque sincerum cupimus vas incrustare?* 'Tis but tinging the cup, and you disguise your Liquor. If we treat Virtue in a course manner, and encourage Vice with all the greediness of respect that may be, no wonder we find Censuring and Pragmaticalness so rife and mischievous. And whether it be out of Malice, or Envy, or Prejudice, or Interest, or whatever else, but thus it is, we are apt to put misconstructions upon our Neighbours Actions, and endeavour to make 'em appear in a wrong, vile Sense. Let any censorious Sycophant chew his cud upon this afore-cited Satyr, and if it doth not drive him into himself, he is a Stock, or something that's worse.

In speaking to this Proposition, I shall observe two Things.

1. What it is that makes a Man Inspect and Reform himself.

2. How this Inspecting and Reforming a man's self may be said to reform others. But of these very briefly.

First then, What it is that makes a man Inspect and Reform himself.

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It is the knowing his own Weakness and Unworthiness. It's Humility ; which is nothing else but a modest and low Opinion of himself, and of his Merits and Endowments. Let us but Exercise this Virtue, and it shall teach us to look into our natural and spiritual Defects. By this we shall cultivate our selves, before we offer at correcting others. By this all high Thoughts are banished, the very clog and obstacle of bettering our Nature. For let these high Thoughts of our selves once Reign, and we float and swell with our Personal deserts: And should God be pleased to exalt us above other men, we should still mount above our selves. Would God endue us with the nature of Angels, we should be apt, Devil-like, to Murmur and Blaspheme. This, this is the main hindrance of our looking into our selves, *viz.* Pride. But to prevent this Vice, and to stop us in our flight, let us impartially consider what there is in us that should so elate us. We are all equally the Sons of poor fallen *Adam*; we are all the off-spring of Sin, Children of Wrath, and had been Heirs only of eternal Perdition, had not the eternally begotten Son of God interceeded for us, and saved us. So that in the
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grand concern of another Life, we have nothing to boast of in particular as to our selves, or to pride it over our Fellow-Creatures. We were equally Nothing, we were equally Sinners; and this very consideration should have some blessed Effect upon us. As to the main things of this Life, *viz.* Divine Grace, and Human Wisdom, they are nothing whereof to boast. Though I'll grant (commonly speaking) we call 'em acquisitions (especially the latter) yet in strictness of speech they are not so. For poinancy of Wit, depth of Learning, and solidity of Reason, are the gifts of God as well as those of Grace; and a man now, as well as the Holy men heretofore, may be said to be endued with the Gifts of God, though not in the same manner, and to the same degree. For Instance: Speaking with Tongues heretofore through the immediate and divine inspiration of the Holy Ghost, was the Gift of God. But what then? So is the skill of diverse Languages with us, a Gift of God still. And do we make no difference between these? yes certainly: They differ as to the Infusion and Operation; the one is supernatural, extraordinary; the other in a more standing ordinary manner; but still the latter

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is a Gift, and he that says it is not, arrogates to himself, and Blasphemes. He therefore that abounds with the blessed Gifts of God, whether in the Natural or Spiritual Sense, let him have a care of being elevated above measure; let him not boast; for by thus boasting he doth but imitate those false Teachers St. Jude mentions, *and turns the grace of God into lasciviousness.* To the Proud Boaster we may rightly apply that Text of St. Paul, 1 Cor. 4. 7. *Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?* The Words are a shrewd Admonition to any gifted man whatsoever, not to think too highly of himself, but that he should look up to the Almighty Donor, with continual Thanks for such his benefits. *For what hast thou* (says the Text) *that thou didst not receive?* And Phil. 2. 3. *In lowliness of mind* (says the same Apostle) *let each esteem other better than themselves.* This is the drift of Christianity, viz. to lay us Prostrate, and not to erect our Plumes. To think worse of our selves than we do of others, instead of preferring our selves before 'em. It teaches us to retire into our selves, and
improve

improve those Talents with which God has intrusted us, instead of trampling upon a weak Brother who wants 'em. I may look down with pity and compassion upon the failings of my Brother, but not with scorn and contempt; I may be-moan him, but I must not deride him. 'Tis our business to Improve, and not to boast our Talents. Let us reproach our selves of our impotency and failings, and we shall find no room to censure our Neighbour; for this would be our aim still, to be in a better plight and condition. Charity is a noble Virtue, and a Virtue too that must begin at home. I'm bound to love my Neighbour as my self, but not to prefer my Neighbour before my self in point of Charity. Therefore if we have any regard to our own welfare, we must, like Wise Christians, take heed to our own concern; we must settle all things right at home, before we peep abroad into the World. For to do otherwise, would be just as wise as if a Prince should leave his own Subjects in broils and confusions, to compose the disturbances of a foreign Land. This is a prying and a censuring too, that's not only not forbidden, but strictly en-joyn'd us. *Keep thy heart with all diligence;*

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for thereout cometh life, says Solomon, Prov. 4. 23. where, by the Heart is meant the whole Man, and is no more than if he had said, Take special care to inspect thy self, for it's this inspection that shall keep thee Healthful and Sound to the last. 'Tis true, we are bid not to *look on our own things*, but on the things of others, Phil. 2. 4. Which words do import, or rather suppose a man's first rectifying himself before he busies himself with other Men: And to have to do with others, is taken in a candid, charitable Sense; and not in such a distorted meaning, as to admit of a proud censuring a Brother with design to scoff him, which is nothing else but a mocking with solemnity, that aggravates the Affront.

2. How this Inspecting and Reforming a man's self, may be said to Reform others.

Good Admonitions have great Efficacy and Validity in perswading, but when seconded with good Example, they carry with 'em much greater prevalency over the Wills and Affections of Men; they conquer 'em, and bring 'em into captivity so far, that they are not able to resist their Power. I don't deny, but that there are some People so steel'd against

against all conviction, so harden'd in their perverseness, that it would be in vain to offer at reducing 'em. Tell a Covetous Man, he ought not to adore his Wealth, and he shall think you have a design upon his Purse. Tell a Proud Man he ought not to think so highly of himself, and he shall scorn and contemn you; and rebuke a scorner, and he shall hate you. Reprove the Sinner for his particular, beloved Sin, and you touch his tender Part, which makes him furious and outrageous, and for your kindness offer'd, shall do you a mischief. I say, though there are many such base People in the World, yet this doth not at all confute what I am speaking, to wit, That he who is a good example to others, is the most likely to Reform 'em.

I have heard it related of a Republick, that did refuse the observance of a good Law, because it was proposed by a vile Person. But this was irrational in them. For though I have said, that good Admonitions, and Example together, are most effectual for the work of Reformation of Manners; yet I deny that any one may refuse a good advice, because the Counsellor himself is a bad Man. No, this is stupidity in a high degree, and is

retain'd by vulgar Minds, which dwell only upon the surface of things, and are in the dark for matters of Truth and real Knowledge.

But to turn to my Reformer, who has duly and carefully examin'd himself; What is there that should hinder his example to take effect? Our Saviour says, that the Hypocrite will see clearly to cast out his brother's Mote, if he first pulls out the Beam which is in his own Eye. The Words import, that he can't do it otherwise. For the work of Reformation is a mighty function, 'tis a heavy and burthensome task; neither can it be carried on with that Christian Decorum, unless supported with those excellent qualifications which may give it Life and Being. It requires presence of Mind, an undaunted Spirit, impartiality of Dealing, vigilancy in Acting, and the like, all which are not the growth of every one, but of them only who have Exercised themselves with severe and sober Examination. But the Vicious man is destitute of these excellent Qualifications. For Vice no sooner gets possession, but it darkens the Man to that degree, that he can't see to rectify, whatever he may do to censure his Brother. Vice draws
a mist

a mist upon his discerning faculty, and doth so benumb him, that he has lost all sense of distinguishing between Good and Evil, and is continually running upon mistakes in judging his Neighbour. What presence of Mind can he be thought to have, who has his continual gripes of Conscience to ruffle and discompose him? What boldness of Spirit can we hope from him who is retained by some peculiar, beloved Sins, which he has not the heart to part with; Sins that shall force him to do violence to Office; that shall make him cool and indifferent in place of Trust, or, (to use a misconstrued word) moderate in his reprehending? Where is his impartiality that connives at Vice in respect to the Person, or rather that countenances another's Crimes in respect to his own? If impartiality governs the Agent, Vice will certainly be animadverted upon, wherever it be found; but if not, Prejudice, or Interest, Favour or Affection shall so corrupt him, that the work of Reformation shall move but slowly, and that Office shall be lightly thought of when the Reformer himself is the greatest Criminal. Vigilancy in acting is another necessary Qualification for the work of Reforming. But we

shall find that he who indulgeth himself in his own Sins, will be but a Puny at correcting others. He that sets up for a Reformer of Manners, must have regard to *St. Paul*, who upon the same occasion bids *Timothy be instant in season, out of season; to reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.* Activity in this affair must be his Element, a painful Industry his delight, let what will come on't, and then that blessed Text, *2 Cor. 12. 15.* how harsh soever it may sound in the sinners Ear, with pleasure will be daily Practis'd, viz. *I will very gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.* Nothing (one would think) can be wanting in such an one to make his Example take effect with others. If Humility be a leading-Virtue, then who can be presum'd to attract others, better than he who inspects himself? If Charity be any sign of a Christian, then may he be thought one who has thus exercis'd it first upon himself by way of due Examination, and afterwards upon others by way of Admonition and Example. Since then inspecting our selves has in it self such glorious Effects, let me give every individual Person that short lesson of our Saviour

Saviour upon another occasion, *Go and do thou likewise.*

What remains now, but that we make our Addresses to God the Father of all Mercy and Comfort, That he would endue us with such a Christian Wisdom, that he would so enlighten our Understandings, and convert our Hearts, that we may be able to cleanse our selves from all filthiness both of Flesh and Spirit, and purify our selves even as he is pure; which, in a word, is the being Good and Virtuous our selves, and doing all the good we can to others.

Now to God the Father, &c.

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M A T. V. 16.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.

IN the 14th. Verse of this Chapter, our Blessed Saviour makes mention of his Church by way of Allusion, of a *City set on a hill, which cannot be hid*, but must needs be taken notice of by reason of its height above other places, which want the advantage which that hath. A good Situation adds lustre to a Building. A thing that is admirable in it self, must be much more so when recommended by a glorious Circumstance; a Circumstance that adds Greatness to Beauty, and doubles the excellency by way of Aggravation. A Building, you know, may be very Beautiful in it self, tho it doth not stand upon the vantage-ground of Prospect; but yet when it doth, it must needs move us with greater admiration and delight. It shews it self with

a more pleasant boldness, and in a more conspicuous manner. Just so is the Christian Church. It is built upon a rising-ground, our Saviour himself being the chief Corner-stone of this Spiritual, but glorious Pile. It is a conspicuous Society, that differs from that of the *Jewish* or Heathen World. It shines with greater strength, and is able to enlighten the dark and benighted part of Mankind with its Brightness. Christians surpass all others; their Light is greater, and their Lives are better. This, this is the grand Luminary of the Firmament, which gives Shine to the whole World. By this were the Heathens heretofore dispossest of their delusions, and brought to the Knowledge of the Truth. They forsook their Idolatry, and Worshipp'd the only Wise and True God. They who were overwhelm'd with Darkness, and encompassed with the shadow of Death, came at length to be Enlighten'd, and were the Glory of those who beheld 'em. By this did the *Jews*, in the fulness of time, relinquish their dark Types, which were but the shadow of better things to come, and embrace the substance. They were above the ceremonies of *Moses*, when *Christ* came to new-teach 'em in a more glorious and elevated

elevated way. Their Clouds and thick Darkneſs were diſperſed, their Miſts and Adumbrations vaniſh'd and diſappear'd, when once this glorious Light, this Day-ſpring from on high came to viſit 'em. This Light firſt ſhone upon them, and after that, they upon the reſt of the World. It was not weak and dim, but of that mighty force as to influence all the corners of the World. No Clouds to intercept that and the object on which it ſhone, but its Rays were clear and piercing, ſtrong and irrefiſtable. No diſtance of time or place has been able to impede its power; *from the riſing of the Sun, to the going down of the ſame*, all nations have been cheriſh'd by it. We then who have been warm'd by it's Beams, ought ſo to demean our ſelves in our different ſtations, as that we may really and to all intents benefit our ſelves and others: And that Man may be ſaid to do ſo, who is unſpotted in his Profeſſion, active and laborious in his Chriſtian Calling, and exemplary in his Life and Converſation. Now tho it doth not lie in the power of the beſt of Men to add to this Light by any action which he can do (for in Holy Writ it is term'd, *the Wiſdom of God in a Myſtery, the Glorious Goſpel, and the Light*

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of the Knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and the like) tho I say we can't add any thing to it, yet, notwithstanding this, God is pleased to accept our Righteousness, when he says here in my Text, *Let your light so shine before men*; as if there was any of the most minute ray which doth not proceed from him: *That they may see your good works*; whenas we of our selves can perform none without his bountiful Grace towards us. At best we are but unprofitable Servants, and so far from Glorifying God, that is, in such a sense as to add Glory to the essential Glory of his Nature, that whatever we have, or whatever we are, proceeds from him, and is purely owing to his Liberality: And had not his Love and Goodness been great towards us, we might, in the very literal meaning, been Worms instead of Men; stocks or stones, or any other inferior Beings, or indeed nothing, or (which is worse) we might have still been Heirs only of eternal Wrath, and doom'd to receive the punishment entail'd upon us from our first Parent's Prevarication. But since God has exalted us, and indeed saved us by thus shining upon us through his Son, let us make him some return of Gratitude

tude for his Kindness towards us, and in some measure shine upon him again. Let our good and vertuous deeds be displayed to our Fellow-Creatures to whom God has been more sparing in his bounty, that by seeing our good Works, they may imitate us too, and by imitating, arrive to that degree of Knowledge and Perfection, so as to Glorify their Father which is in Heaven.

In speaking to these Words I shall observe Two things chiefly.

First, The manner of this Light Shining before others ; it is so to Shine before Men.

Secondly and lastly , the end of this Light Shining before men, *viz. that they may see our good works, and glorify their Father which is in Heaven.*

First then for the manner of this Light Shining before Men, it is so to shine before 'em.

Since God has been pleas'd differently to dispense his Gifts to the Sons of Men, he expects that they should return him accordingly. He that has but one Talent, lies as open for reproof from God, the first Donor, either for dissipating it, or not improving it to the best advantage, as he that has received more. And
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in the 25th. Chapter of St. *Matth.* we don't find the Slothful Servant condemned for having but one Talent, but because he did not improve that one Talent. Whatever he had receiv'd, was purely from his Lord, which ought to have had a better return than that of negligence: And this occasion'd his heavy doom, as we read in the same Chapter, his Talent was taken from him, he was depriv'd even of that which he had, and doom'd to receive the punishment due to his neglect, which was *to be cast into utter darkness*. In whatsoever measure or degree God endues us, we ought to be thankful, and make it our business to improve. For in the Parable the Servant was cashier'd by his Master for being Unprofitable. Had he traded with his store, and encreased it for his Master's use, he had acted the part of a Faithful and Trusty Steward, and had been rewarded accordingly, as well as those his Fellow-servants which had gain'd in their Master's absence. Had he been as some now-adays (who can't be Stewards without being Villains too) he would have encreased his store in one sense, and have gain'd for himself, whatever he had done for his Master. The excellency of this
Parable

Parable sets forth the great duty of every Christian, to exercise those abilities which God has given him, to the utmost advantage that he can. Now that which is called Light here, and in many more places of Holy Scripture of the same purport, I take to signifie that Knowledge which God has given us, whereby we are enabled to govern our selves in the whole course of our Lives, with that Wisdom and Conduct, as by our deeds and words to influence others, and glorify our God. But what this Light is, so as to give a strict and adequate definition of the same, or wherein it doth critically consist, I shall not insist upon; but only this I think, that whether it may be taken for the Light of Nature, or the Understanding, which we call Right Reason, whereby Men governed their Lives and Actions before Christianity had any footing in the World; or whether it may be taken for that Light or Gospel-Truth which in Holy Scripture is stiled the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the Knowledge of *Jesus Christ*; that is, whether it may signifie the Wisdom of Nature, or the Wisdom of Grace, or both in conjunction, is not my business at present to determine (tho our Saviour's Words do chiefly

chiefly aim at the wisdom of Grace, thro the benefit of the Gospel) but this I shall say, That as it is the duty of all Christian Professors in general to shew a good Light to those without the Pale of the Church, that is, to *Jews, Turks, Heathens*, and Unbelievers; so it is the duty of every particular member of the same, to benefit each other, according to the measure of Power and Abilities which God has dealt to him in his particular Station. *Let your light so shine before men.* The Words amount to this:
“ I charge you, who are my Disciples,
“ whom I have elevated above others
“ by my doctrine and example, that ye
“ take heed to follow me in this, by
“ doing the same to the rest of the
“ World, that they, the benighted part
“ of it, who have not felt my beams of
“ Charity as you have, may by your
“ good Conversation be won over to
“ embrace my Gospel, and be the glory
“ of succeeding Generations; that every
“ one, even to the end of the World,
“ of what station or ability soever he be,
“ may work his utmost to answer it, yet
“ by so doing he may Glorify his Heavenly Father.

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Thus, to whom God has given an Understanding more comprehensive than that of other Men, an Understanding that is longer in its reach towards the knowledge of God and Nature, he ought not to be such a Niggard as to confine it to the little compass of himself, but freely and generously to communicate to those who stand in need. But this is not all. He is not only to communicate to others, but also to communicate to 'em in that manner as to bring benefit to the Persons to whom it is communicated. For otherwise, if mischief be the product of Knowledge, and the Understanding be whetted only to work evil Machinations; if instead of imitating our Saviour by doing Good, we take a wrong Pattern, and copy after him who is upon the Reverse, and still *seeking whom he may devour*, then we misuse our Talents, and shall certainly account for so doing another day. To relieve the hungry in his necessity, is an act of Charity; but yet to relieve the Ignorant by rectifying his Understanding, and leading him into the knowledge of Truth, is a greater Charity; and consequently the neglect of this, when we have opportunity to do it, is the more heinous. For
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by the one we support the Body, by the other the Soul of a poor distressed Neighbour, and the Charity of the one doth as much surpass the other, as the Soul exceeds the Body in the excellency of its Nature. But now, if, instead of exercising our abilities in that manner as becomes us, we act quite contrary, we abuse those Gifts by which God has been pleased to distinguish us from other men. If he has rais'd us to great Power and Dignity, we falsify our Trust if we don't demean our selves accordingly. Men of great Power and Abilities must have a care lest they be as so many Spots and Blemishes to those of an inferior Class? 'Tis the business of these men to look to themselves with that caution and nicety, that neither by their ignorance or rascality they become contemptible to others. *A City set on a hill can't be hid*, says our Blessed Lord. And let every one have a care how he is mounted. For if Knavery and Ignorance even in a low, mean Condition, shall scarce pass undiscern'd, how much less then shall they miss being hooted at when they appear on the Publick Theatre of the World? Let a Fool or a Knave be in a High Place, and if he is not hiss'd at

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for his impudence, he has better luck than many of his Neighbours. Such an one prevents the obloquy of a foul, slandering Tongue, for he is his own Promulgator. He then doth not let his *light shine before men* who doth any ways impede its power, or obstruct its extent, or prevent its operations; which may be done fundry ways. But I shall mention three, which are the common obstacles and impediments of it, and they are, Fear, Self-interest, and Sensuality; either of these shall so hinder this Light, that it shall never exert it self with that efficacy as it should do. Nay, these shall hinder it when it should most eminently shew it self. *Ex: gr.* A Magistrate should be exemplary in a more peculiar manner. He ought to be regular, firm, and true in the acts of Piety and Virtue. He must be uniformly Virtuous. One Virtue must not thwart another; neither will it avail him to palliate his partiality in not distributing Justice, by saying his Mercy is transcending that; for Justice and Mercy be no ways inconsistent, provided the Magistrate superintends the Man. A base Fear will make him slacken the hand of Justice, because he will not disoblige or discountenance his Neighbour

bour. Self-interest shall move him to pervert Judgment, and the power of the Magistrate shall sneak and disappear when the prospect of filthy Lucre shall affect his mind. A strong Purse shall turn and wind him to any thing, if Avarice sits at the Helm. Now to this point he moves, and anon to the other, accordingly as he is led away with the temptation. Sensuality is a general term for those bodily pleasures with which men delight themselves, as Lust, Intemperance in Eating and Drinking, which we stile Gluttony and Drunkenness. But these Vices have deadly Effects ; for they blind and stupify the discerning Faculty ; they enervate the Man, and extinguish the Light within him ; they disable him so far in the end, that he shall not distinguish between Good and Evil with that clearness and vivacity as he should, or as his Office or Station doth in a peculiar manner require of him.

But it is not so much the want of Knowledge to judge and distinguish aright, which makes the Magistrate prevaricate (though God knows it often is) as want of Resolution and Sincerity. He knows that he ought indifferently to pu-

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nish the Malecontents, who are under his Cognizance and Jurisdiction. He knows that no respect of their Persons is to be had ; that Vice must be animadverted upon, though the Criminal be never so potent ; and that the Coercive Power must with courage and impartiality be put in Execution. Had he regard to this in the main ; was Impartiality lookt upon by him as a standing Rule to govern by ; would he, without any discriminating of Persons, put the said Rule in force ; I don't doubt but my Man of Power would be a greater Curb to the Unruly, than generally now he is. We should not then have such great and mighty Miscreants daring Authority, and bidding defiance to God and Man ; but they would be taught to stand in awe, and not to provoke 'em at that high rate as they commonly do. But Pusillanimity frights the Magistrate from exercising his Power as Justice permits , or rather requires of him. He is afraid he shall be hated, malign'd, or threatn'd for being Just. But this is fear not rightly plac'd: It is the fear of Man, and not of God, and consequently must be weak and dishonourable. And it is equally the Magistrate's not having the Fear of God before

fore his Eyes, which makes him forbear to punish, as makes a Criminal commit a Villany. By this base dishonourable Fear, many enormities have thrust up their heads with a bold defiance ; many outrages have been acted, which had not been done , had he fear'd God so far as to have been proof against the fear of Men, and dar'd to be Just, though he had been singular for being so, and had brought upon himself the odium of the profane , rude, and unthinking Vulgar. Above all things therefore let my Man of Power, whether it be greater or whether it be less, take special care lest by any means he brings a disrepute upon his Station ; let him be resolute, and diligent, and impartial in his Administrations, and then his Conscience shall give him better and more satisfactory Acclamations, than all the World can Obloquies and Reproaches. Then shall his Righteousness (as the *Psalmist* says) *be as clear as the light, and his just dealing as the noon-day.*

But who stands in awe of a pusillanimous Magistrate ? Who reveres a man in Power , that is a partial Coward , or Unjust, or, (if you please) partial and unjust, because a Coward ? For Cowardice in this case is a moral Evil, and is

as unsufferable as any whatsoever. Not to punish in time of need, is an injury to the Publick-weal; it inverts the saying of *St. Peter*, 1 Epistle 2. 14. And Governours in this sense will not be for the scourge or punishment of Evil-doers, but rather they'l be for Encouragement of them, for the scandal, not for the praise of them that do well. But if we will look into the cause of this base fear, or partial dealing of the Magistrate, we shall find some cursed Vice or other lurks at bottom; Lust, Covetousness, Envy, Malice, or Ill-nature, shall have such vile Effects upon him, that it cramps him in all the performances of his executive Power; and when he should do good in this particular act of distributing Justice, he can't, because Evil is present with him. Moreover, these, or any of these Vices, make him odious in the sight of God and Man, and if he should be rigorous in punishing others for the same or the like, people would be apt to recriminate upon him, and ask how he dares shew his Face in the Acts of Justice, when he himself lies as obnoxious to be animadverted upon as any other Criminal? In short, he is a Brute as well as a Magistrate, and is conscious to himself of his being so, and this

this may be the occasion of his Fear and Neglect. But this is so far from being a good example to others, and from adding glory to Greatness, that any one, unless he be as wicked as himself, is so far from inwardly reverencing such an one in High-Place, that he must needs scorn and despise him. He is so far from shining in a brave and glorious Light of good and virtuous Actions, that his Impiety shall be blaz'd abroad, and he loath'd and abhorr'd as a Nuisance and Reproach to his Fellow-Brethren in Dignity and Power. I thought fit to mention these things of the Magistrate, because I take these which I have hinted at, to be the usual vices that are apt to sway him. Other faults I don't doubt he may be guilty of, which are common to other Mortals, as Whoring, Swearing, Drinking, Gaming, Slandering, &c. But I shall leave him here; only this I shall add for his Consideration, *viz.* That as we are exhorted by the Apostle, *to pray for all that are in Authority*, so it is the business of all that are in Authority to consider the end of this our praying for 'em, it is primarily for themselves, that they may discharge their Offices in that due manner, that we remotely may receive the Blessing which

is the effect of their good Government, which is, to lead a quiet and peaceable Life in all Godliness and Honesty.

But there are others also in another Capacity, who are far from letting their Light shine before Men. Men whom God has endued with a vast compass of Knowledge, and set 'em above the common level; whose Reason has been stronger and more polite than that of others, and should (one would think) make 'em appear as so many Champions for the Cause of God and Truth, against the errors of the Blasphemous and Profane. But we daily experience the contrary of this in some. For how many have we known, who have really been famous in their respective Generations upon the account of Speculation; have had all the advantages that Parts and Education could furnish 'em with; yet these very men have endeavour'd, with all the industry and labour imaginable, to debauch Mankind with their poisonous Principles, and their subtilty of Philosophy. Had they been Heathens only that had done us this Dishonour, we could more easily have born it, but they are our sly and insinuating Christians; our false Friends, and treacherous Enemies, who have thus mag-

magnified themselves against us. Men who profess Christ and his Gospel, yet set up their standards of defiance against him. 'Tis true, their Abilities have been great; and so has their Mischief too. To corrupt the Ignorant by debauching their Principles, is now thought but mean and little, and scarce to be called a Victory. But these high Pretenders to Reason, must be more eminent in their Delusions, or they raise no Trophies to their Wisdom. They scorn to aim at this or that Sect in particular; but they must strike at Religion in general, or they forfeit their pretence to that Glory and Renown, of being thought the Wits of the Age they live in. He that has had no sting against God and Religion, and has broach'd no pretty Idea against Christianity, must be deem'd a pedantick Bigot, and deserves to be cashier'd the Society of the witty, learned Tribe. He that can't shew both skill and art in a bad Cause, and colour over an Absurdity by a subtle management or charming Oratory, is to be set at nought, as being to them but an unprofitable Servant. For he that shall pass muster with these Sons of *Belial*, must be able to shew himself, upon occasion, in a fine, neat dress of Philo-

Philosophy, when the Devil and they shall require his Assistance. He that will Patronize Atheism, Deism, or Socinianism, must do it with the greatest Stratagem that he can. One fallacy must be seconded with another; this Argument must not only be fallacious, but painted with Rhetorick, and all the sly Enchantments that Wit and Learning can produce, whereby it may the better insinuate it self into the Hearts of the credulous and prejudicious. Thus have these scandalous, bold Blasphemers workt their utmost to debauch Mankind with their Novel-Doctrines and upstart-Opinions, who, if they can but present (as they think) some mighty thing to the World, don't value what disturbance both Church and State do feel by it. Let them instead of being exemplary in Life and Doctrine, but be sceptical and surprizing in their Notions, and Tyrannize over others by riding upon 'em, and Christianity, or indeed common Morality may be soon shut out of doors. Now had these Men sincerely endeavour'd to inform themselves, and as sincerely practis'd according to their Knowledge, they would have appear'd as so many glorious Lights to the ignorant and the inferior sort of Men.

Men. But they have forgot God who gave them these Abilities, which has provok'd him to forsake them, and leave them to their own wild Inventions. They might have been serviceable both to God and Man, had not Pride and Singularity turn'd 'em another way. Whatever pretence others have to write, I'm not to Account for : But this I think, that if every one would observe this Rule, *viz.* Of letting Conscience be his Guide in what he writ, many things, which do now fly abroad in the World, would never have seen the Sun. Heresy, Schism, and open Prophaneness, would not have had those throngs of Abettors which now they have ; neither would the itch of appearing in Publick seize 'em so far as to make 'em break the bounds of all Laws, as they do, did but their Hearts run along with their Pens. Error and Blasphemy could not (one would think) be encourag'd by the men of Reason at that high rate as they are, did not the Devil give 'em a lifting hand, and tempt these Men to misemploy their Talents. 'Tis strange, methinks, that now-a-days Reason and Religion must be thought Inconsistent, and that Christianity should suffer most through its Professors. To
dispute

dispute roundly, and rail handsomly against the Articles of our Faith, is now reckon'd an high pitch of Wisdom. A Ring-leader of Parties, and Patronizer of Factions, is hoisted up as a notable Man, and no wonder if shoals of Miscreants erect their Standards. Clamorous Discontents have been the Cause in a great measure of meaner Mens Deficiency in point of good Manners. And if the Learned will shew their Villany in the Blasphemy of their Writings, no wonder then if inferior Sots do shew it too in the looseness of their Lives. 'Tis pity, great pity that Men who have any common share of Philosophy, should suffer themselves to be govern'd by their unruly Lusts. A common sense of Honour would teach 'em better things than what they generally Practice. Would we learn of the old Heathens, as we should do, and retain their Philosophy instead of their Vices, we should find greater Regulation of Manners than now we do. But we are become very preposterous: For we imitate the Heathens only in their dark-side, and not in their Wisdom of Philosophy. We have different Sectaries now, as they had heretofore, though in a different manner. We have our *Epicureans*,
who

who can be well content to enjoy the Ease and Pleasure of *Epicurus* (if he was such as he is reckon'd by some) though the bulk of his Philosophy is the least in all their Thoughts. We have our *Stoicks* too, who take a mighty Pride in being surly; and in their Moroseness shall match the greatest Cynick of 'em all. We have moreover our *Platonists*, who in their soft and easy Temper, graceful Carriage, smooth Address, complaisant Deportment, and the like, shall glide into the Affections of the unwary, though at bottom they are meer Hypocrites and Pedantick Cheats. Yet these *Platonick*, smooth-carriag'd Creatures shall value themselves for being what they are, and fancy themselves a Light for others to walk by, but as far from it as light itself is from darkness, or the best of Christians from the worst of Heathens. I shall not speak much of the two former sorts of Behaviour; for a luxurious Life and surly Deportment, however they may be practis'd by some, yet they are seldom or never recommended as Qualifications, but generally abominated by men of any Sobriety or Good-Nature. But since this soft complaisant way of demeanor, is deem'd a necessary Qualification

tion to piece up a Gentleman, or to dub him well-bred; I shall remark this, that I wonder it should have such vile Effects as Treachery and Dissimulation.

For look into the Carriage of some who stile themselves Gentlemen, and they are a Compound of nothing else. But to obviate a little Objection: What, Is not fair Language, soft Address, meek Deportment, Commendable? Doth not Nature as well as Holy Scripture bid us be courteous, affable, meek and mild to one another? And if Courtesy, Meekness, Mildness and Affability are enjoyn'd us by both, I hope a man may make it his business to carry himself accordingly. I answer: It is not the Behaviour it self that I am speaking against, but the abuse of it as it is generally practis'd, and yet retains the name of genteel Deportment. I take such sort of carriage, simply in it self, to be the most Comely, the most Christian. But yet I do say, if People will use fair Language for a Stratagem; if a generous Air of Behaviour must serve the designs of every proud, upstart Sy-cophant; It's enough to make any one relinquish the very Mode, did not his Wisdom and his Honesty exceed that of his Gentility. I'll own a Courteous,
Meek,

Meek, Affable Behaviour recommends any one ; but when it shews it self only in formal appearance, to disguise Malice in order for the better exerting it , then it changes its Hue, and shews the Hypocrite through the Courtier. And he that would survey a Gentleman now, and what it is that makes him such, will find such Pedantick Treachery in the Compound, that, was it not for some, who do gloriously maintain their Title in a manly way, the very Name would be odious and despicable. Were not great Births and Titles seconded by great Actions by the few amongst us ; did not some of our illustrious Stems afford as choice Products, as even those did from whence they sprang , neither our Nobility nor Gentry would have much reason to erect their Plumes. They might huff, and domineer, and swear too, but this would not prevent 'em from being contemptible. Should our Forefathers rise again from the Dead, and come among us, sure they would disown this their Bastardizing Progeny, who have scarce any thing left which belong'd to their Ancestors, but the poor stump of Honour, which serves 'em for nothing else but to fly in their Faces, and upbraid 'em for
their

their shameful degeneracy. They have wasted their Consciences as well as Estates, and I think we may say they are as poor Christians as Gentlemen. For how hardly is that which really constitutes a Person Noble and Honourable, to be found among us? What is become of that Courage and Resolution in doing great and hazardous Exploits? Where is that Magnanimity and Bravery in acting and suffering for the sake of our Country, as our Ancestors did heretofore? Where is that Charity and Hospitality that was in the old time, for relieving our poor distressed Brethren? I say, what is become of all this? Why, they are out of date, they are antiquated Virtues, and do favour not at all of the Mode of Living now. But as out-dated and as antiquated as they are, let my Men of Birth take this along with 'em: That if once they come to be so sturdily Pedantick, as to be above the habitual exercise of Virtue and Honesty, I'm afraid their Honour (I mean that which is really such) will be at a low Ebb; for they shall suffer a miserable Degradation by being despised by those who would have been otherwise much their Inferiors, and would have reverenc'd 'em too, had these my
poor

poor Men of Honour been greater Men, and less Gentlemen. I shall not cite Holy Scripture to those who make it their business to Burlesque it; but I deliver 'em over to the 8th Satyr of *Juvenal*, and if they are not past common Sense, and good Manners, it's to be hoped it may advance somewhat towards their Reformation.

He will shew 'em what a pitiful thing Quality is without Virtue. Nay, he shall tell 'em, that the greatness of the Quality enhanseth the Crime, and makes it appear in a more odious Hue. I don't know what prevalency Custom may have over the minds of Men, but this I am assured of, that it can never alter the nature of things: Virtue and Vice shall still be the same by the verdict of right Reason, however the prejudicated fancies of some may misrepresent 'em. Moral Goodness even in the meanest Person carries with it a pleasant Air and Delight; but moral Evil has a malignant Aspect in whatever pomp and dignity it may Glory and Triumph. And let the men of Quality know this, That nothing will maintain their Title, but that which first gave it birth, and that was a firm and unspotted Honesty in its utmost latitude

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titude of Expression, by which People were prompted to act so bravely as they did. Would my Men of Honour let this be their standard, they would, I think, reduce the World to a better Harmony than now it is. They would appear in the World as so many Stars, shining forth in their different Magnitudes; and tho' one Star differ'd from another in Glory, yet would they all joyn in the happy Constellation, to influence the lower Orb, and turn their Night into a glorious Day. And this would be to *let their light shine before men*. But there is another Order of Men, who in a peculiar manner ought to answer the charge given in my Text, I mean the Priests. I shall hint upon these. The Office of a Priest we all know is of it self an high Office. Kings themselves have been Priests heretofore; and they may be so still (for ought that I know) without any derogation to Majesty. Men of God, are the Oracles of God, and, as such, should have especial care how they become false, and betray their high and grand Commission. They are his spiritual Stewards and Dispensers, and upon that account should take such methods as should, in a more especial manner, avpid all occasions of stumbling
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in a Brother's way. St. Peter in his first Epistle, Chap. 4. v. 11. says, *If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God.* That is, he that officiates in the Holy things of God, let him not only behave himself like an Oracle in speaking Truth, but also by speaking with that due boldness and magnanimity, as becomes such a mighty Dispenser. Then will his Corrections and Admonitions be had in reverence of the sturdy Sinner; and in this sense, Preaching shall not be vain. Such a one will be sure to comfort the feeble-minded, and support the weak, and relieve the ignorant, by shewing 'em the right way that leads to Everlasting Bliss. But if Ignorance cramps him from exercising his Holy Function, as is required of him; if he that should be a Teacher to others, is a meer Cast-away; if he whose Lips should prepare Knowledge, is himself of Knowledge most wanting, what will become of these Authoritative Rebukes and Censures which he, as Presbyter of the Church, is bound to issue out upon the bold Blasphemers of Religion? If in respect of Ignorance, we may say now, as Hosea spoke heretofore upon a like account, *viz. Like people like priest*, this will be a scandal deplorable, as well as damage to

the People. For no wonder if they be ignorant when the Priest himself is no better. I'll grant, a man can't always be blam'd upon the account of his Ignorance ; but an ignorant Priest is without excuse. Want of Knowledge in a low, 'mean Condition, may easily be pardon'd ; but when once dulness comes to be dignified and consecrated too, I can't tell what will prove a greater Eye-sore to the World than such a scandalous Usurpation. Moreover, the loose Life of a Priest shall intercept this Light from shining before men. I have spoke elsewhere of the influence of good Example, therefore in this place I shall only say this, That for any Man of God to preach up an holy Life to others, and yet run quite counter to his own Doctrine, is to shew himself to be too near of Kin to those saucy Blasphemous *Jews*, who could not be content to Crucify their Lord, but they must do it in an aggravating taunting way ; the Purple-Robe was put on, and he saluted King in derision, just before they spit in his face. I need not strain my self for the Application, I think it is ready and easy enough. Let the Priest then, of all others, have a care how they do Blaspheme, by denying our Saviour

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and being inconsistent with themselves ; for they will more abundantly answer for their miscarriages, as having a double weight upon 'em, *viz.* The care of others, I mean the People, as well as themselves ; but the best measure they can take to watch for the Souls of others, is first to look well to their own.

But I proceed to my second and last thing, *viz.* The end of this Light shining before men ; it is, *That they may see our good works, and glorify their Father which is in Heaven.* Would every one in his single station wherein God has plac'd him, make this his endeavour, *viz.* to answer it to his utmost power, in that proportion which God requires of him ; if every one to whom he has given little or much, would exert the same, according to that measure which he has distributed to him, we should not then find such unwarrantable Interlopings as we do. Every one then would move regularly in his proper Sphere. Every one in his station would chearfully perform his duty. Superiors, and men of Authority, would shew their Eminency, not so much by the Grandeur of their Places, as the greatness of their Persons. Rulers then would imitate God their Pattern : They would

terrify the Evil-doers, and encourage those that do well. Government would sit well and easy upon their shoulders. Neither Partiality, nor Injustice, nor Fear, nor Affection, would bias 'em this way or t'other. There would be little intermixture of folly to sway them; but Wisdom and Integrity should so govern them, as to enable 'em to govern others. Inferiors, of what quality or capacity soever they were, would be made to stand in awe. Humility would teach them to live quietly and contentedly under their Magistrates and Governours. So that no Ambition should prompt 'em to aspire; no Pride should lead 'em to rebel; no Lusts or Passions should tempt them to offend. For tho' Power and Greatness may make men fear, yet 'tis Virtue alone which will make 'em reverence their Magistrates. Then would the men of Contemplation employ their Talents in searching after Truth wherever it lay. Their Understandings would be busied upon those things which are the most perfect Themes, upon the best and noblest Subjects on which to employ themselves. But more especially, how would they look up to God, how would they dwell upon him, *the Author and Giver of all good Gifts!*

Their

Their noblest Faculties would all tend this way, they would always be reaching at his Immense Being, and be constantly entertaining themselves with Him who is the Source of all Perfection. Then would the men of Parts and Speculation, instead of prophaning Religion, and blaspheming their Maker, boldly and resolutely vindicate the Cause of God against all impious Gainfayers. No subtle and insinuating Atheists should be able to maintain his ground whilst such as these bid defiance. They would not only from the strength of a good Cause, as having God and Truth on their sides, but by meer dint of Argument be able to pull down the bold Pretender, overthrow his Doctrine, and proclaim him to the world as a Usurper over men's Reason and Consciences. Then would the Schismatick have no cause to boast of his Separation, since God has raised us up such mighty men to baffle and confound them. Then would our Men of Honour and Quality scorn to lean upon such a broken reed as the Fame of their Ancestors is; they would build, not depend upon it: And as they are taller by standing upon their shoulders, so they would shew the world what good proficiency they have

made by this their Vantage-Ground.

Then would the Men of God, I mean the Priests, reflect upon their Sacred and Tremendous Employment, and consider whose Vicegerents they are. That they are the Embassadors of the Son of God, and as such, must in no wise condescend to any thing that may bring Dishonour to their Lord and Master. They ought thus to reflect with themselves, That as he has left 'em in his stead to Superintend his Church, so they must take care to follow his directions, and imitate him so far, by being such Faithful Soldiers under him in that peculiar manner, as to be above the World whilst they live and converse in it. In a word, would Men of higher Stations, and greater Abilities, be Exemplary in their Lives, People of meaner Ranks and Gifts would be apt to imitate; I say, Imitate: For I remember my Text bids us *let our light shine before men, that they may see our good works, &c.* The words do intimate, that we can't benefit by the good works of others, but by imitating to practise the same according to the proportion of our Abilities; whether they be those of Nature, or those of Grace, or those external things of Fortune. And this is Universal.

versal. For if we consult those Nations that have been eminent for their Virtue and good Manners, we shall find that they have owed their Eminency to the Wisdom and Conduct of their Superiors. And to mention one Nation without any more. How famous were the old *Romans* for their Virtue and Honesty: How great was their Industry, their Courage, their Piety, and Frugality? Their large and glorious Conquests witnessed their indefatigable Industry and Courage. Their Integrity was so remarkable, that this became a common saying, *viz.* To speak fairly and act sincerely, was to speak and act like a true, honest, and hearty *Roman*; *More Romano*, as the stile goes. And so for any other Virtue. Who more Just, who more Faithful, who more Temperate than those *Romans*? Yet in most of their Virtuous, their Good, their Honourable Actions, their Kings and their Consuls shewed them the way. In like manner, would some Great ones with us, not think themselves above the Discipline of Christianity, or indeed the Rules of Common Morality, I verily think they would be much greater than they are, and the ruder sort, copying'em, would be much better too, and become more civiliz'd.

They

They would all serve God in their different Stations, and this would be the way to glorify him.

Now to glorifie God is, as I hinted before, not meant any adding to the Essential Glory of his Nature, or contributing any thing to it; To think this, would be as ridiculous, as blasphemous. He would be a strange Idiot who should fancy that that Being which is Immense, Omnipotent, Infinite, and Eternal, could be capable of being any ways advanc'd or eclips'd by any thing that we can do. No, this can't be the meaning of glorifying our Heavenly Father. For when we have done all we can; when we have liv'd as we would, God still remaineth equally Unchangeable; his Divinity is untouch'd, and abides as it was even before the World began. No benefit or advantage then can accrue to God from our Glorifying him; He neither needs nor wants our Praises, because he can in no measure be better'd by 'em. To Glorify God then, signifies this: He has Covenanted with us by his Son, That if we will praise him in a Holy Life, he will reward us with Eternal Happiness, but without it he will not. *And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal*

nal life, 1 John 2. 25. God will have us
 Glorify him by our good Works, by
 reason we benefit our selves. So that to
 Glorify God in one sense, is to Glorify
 our selves in another. By so doing we
 advance our selves, not Him ; we pursue
 our own Happiness, but sure not God's ;
 for His is altogether independent from us ;
 it is as immutable as his own Being, and
 wholly and perfectly incircled within
 himself, and consequently cannot be ow-
 ing to his Creatures, the workmanship
 of his own Hand. *That they may see your
 good works, and glorify your Father, may*
 carry this meaning : We Glorify God,
 when we make it our business to imitate
 those who do so. Now by imitating
 Great and Holy Men, we do remotely
 imitate God himself. We do immediate-
 ly and directly follow their steps, but
 our ultimate end of this our imitation,
 is God's Glory, and our own Happiness.
That they may see your good works, and glo-
rify, that is, that they, by seeing your
good works, may glorify your heavenly Fa-
ther. But a Man may say, How may I be
 said to glorify God, by seeing another do
 so ? What are his Actions to me ? Must not
 I bear my own burthen ? Must not I answer
 for my self, and be rewarded according
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to my Good or Evil deeds done in this Life? Therefore what advantageth it me, that another is Virtuous, when I my self am not so? I may verify that Sentence all the days of my life, *Video meliora, proboque, deteriora sequor*. I may gaze at the good Man, and admire him too for his excellent Qualifications, and yet continue as loose and profane as ever. I may see glorious and shining Examples daily before me, and yet be as scandalous as if I had never seen or heard of any such. I answer therefore: The words of my Text don't from any necessary Consequence or Deduction imply, that a man must be Virtuous by seeing another so, but they do only set forth to us the natural tendency that good works have to influence others to shew the like: And though not always practical to the same degree, yet in proportion to the Power and Ability God has given us. Though we can't soar to the same equal Pitch of Virtue with others, who far excel us in Abilities, yet we all do our utmost, and to do so, in our different Stations, is all that God requires at our hands. Thus when I consider how the Widow in the Gospel, outshone the Rich in a glorious Charity with her poor Mite, by reason
that

that it was her All, I am so far from re-
pining at God's various Dispensations,
that I cannot forbear to magnify his Wis-
dom, who has constituted in the World
such a happy and regular subordination
of Men. Let every one therefore (what-
soever his Abilities are) shew a good
Example in the practice of good Works.
For when all is said, that is the Test which
he must stand by at the last day, when
God shall come to judge him. 'Tis this
alone which constitutes the Saint on
Earth, and makes him so in Heaven too ;
and he doth but usurp upon the Name ;
he is presumptuous and precarious that
doth not observe this as his standing-Rule.
Let Dissimulators boast and prate what
they please, yet that Text of Saint *John*
shall stand good and firm to the end of the
World, *viz. He that doth righteousness, is*
righteous, even as he is righteous, 1 John
3. 7. For if Men cannot produce their
good works (whether they be Saints, or
Believers, or whatever else) to recom-
mend themselves to God, let 'em not
boast of their Light within, for at the
last day they shall no sooner be sav'd,
than the Devils themselves, who believe
as well as they. If they so much abound
with the Gospel-light, as sometimes they
would

would make us believe they do, I wonder it would not stream forth and diffuse it self in its kind and benign Influences. One would be tempted to think, that by such a glorious Light they should wonderfully fructify, and be render'd capable of excellent Productions. Would they who pretend to be such mighty Champions in the Cause of Christ and his Gospel, make this their Endeavour, *viz.* To let their works square with the true, *Orthodox* Faith, I don't at all doubt, but that then our Saints, our Believers, our Faithful, our Holy Brethren, or by what Name soever they are pleased to distinguish themselves from the wicked and profane Herd, would quit themselves better than now they do. They would imitate God more, and Blaspheme him less, and set forth his Image in nothing so much as in the being really Holy.

Thus have all the great and Holy Men in their different Stations and Degrees, imitated their great Original: And we bless God for such Men departed this Life in his Faith and Fear. I shall not confine the Words, *viz. that seeing your good works*, merely to our Contemporaries, for the sense of the Words may extend further, and the good Works of the Dead

Dead may reach us, so, as that we may receive unspeakable Benefit by them. Thus when we read the great and good Men of what Age soever they were, they are to us as so many Guides to walk by. For how doth their Learning strike us with admiration? How doth their Piety move us with delight? How do their Pathetical Discourses sooth and elevate us, and (as it were) ravish us from our selves? They have so took up our thoughts, that we have forgot our worldly, inferior Concerns. And well we might. For what delight is so great as that of informing our selves in point of Knowledge, in order to advance us in the practice of a Good and Virtuous Life. For tho the Doers of the Word are pronounc'd Happy, and not the Hearers only of *Christ's* Gospel; yet this I am certified of, to wit, That I must know my Duty before I can practice it. Other Mortals may other pleasures prize, but this should be their Main, *viz.* God's Glory, and their own Happiness. Let us look back upon the Great and the Holy, who, tho they have long since departed, how wonderfully they do speak to us in the excellency of their Writings: And if we will not take example by what we
read,

read, I'm afraid we should scarce be persuaded tho they rose again from the dead. How piercingly has the Light stream'd forth, how clear has the Sun appear'd, and yet not influenc'd the Object on which it Shone? some things shall fructify by the Sun's Rays, but when darted upon a Dunghil, the product has been nothing. Just so it is with us Mortals. Many who have convers'd with the dead, have shew'd lively examples in the practice of good Works, though others have remain'd un- touch'd with 'em. And if these have had a good effect on 'em, much more (one would think) should our living-Guides. A man may shew another his Journey by the help of description, but he that goeth along with him, is the sur- rer Guide. So it is as to Religion. Men by writing handsomely and earnestly, may urge our duty home to us; they may be very persuasive and convincing: but when we find that those who Write so well, Live no Worse, this is irresistibly taking and alluring. For such as these, the Wise and Sober part of the World will be continually plying Heaven in their joyful and grateful Accents. For these publick, these best of Benefactors, we ought all to shew some return to God in a just and thankful

thankful acknowledgment. We should never cease to Bless God for these Men who have done such great things to Reform the world. They who have been sound and Orthodox in matters of Belief, and in their Lives have been no ways disagreeable and inconsistent, have done all they can to Glorify God in this World, and for these their good Works they shall be sure to be Glorified in the next; Happy, unspeakably Happy shall they be whom the Lord at his coming shall find so doing. How must we then reproach our selves! How will our Consciences upbraid us if we can so stupidly see our Fellow-Creatures so much surpass us, and yet we not aiming at any imitation! Let us fear lest we, who are rational Creatures, be a Reproach to those that are not. Let us not be an exception from the rest of the Creation, by not answering the end of our Being. Let not the Beasts shame us by giving Glory to their Creator, whenas we do not. Nay, let not the most savage of 'em admonish us in praising God by a continual exercising those faculties which he has given 'em. Let not inanimate Creatures be forc'd to shew us our Duty by a chearful performance of theirs. The Sun Glorifies God when he runs his

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Course;

Course; the Moon waits her certain seasons, and deviates not, and the Stars the end for which they were ordain'd. The Winds and Storms Glorify God, for they fulfil his Word. The Earth, the Sea, and others the Works of the Lord, all these Praise and Magnify the Lord. And this serves only to set forth the Glory of that Omnipotent Wisdom, who has plac'd all these his Creatures in such a regular manner. Let not Man then in his Rational Capacity forget to exercise his obedience in setting forth God's Glory. Let his Understanding be employed in contemplating the most noble Objects; his Will in choosing the most desirable Good; and then, and not till then, shall he be happy in his Rational Nature. But the Christian above all other men must be exemplary in shewing God's Praise, by conforming himself to the Rules of his Christian Duty: And then shall he also in his peculiar and elevated Capacity, as well as the rest of the Creation, *Glorify his Father which is in Heaven.*

Now to God the Father, &c.

Pfal. XXX the latter part of the 5th Verse.

*Heaviness may endure for a night, but
joy cometh in the morning.*

Amongst the great and various Qualifications the Holy and Royal *Psalmist* was Eminent for, there was nothing which spake his Praise and Renown so much, as his constant submissive behaviour towards God. In his Prosperity he trusted not to Man, and in his Adversity he trusted in God that he should quickly be deliver'd. His Courage was great, and so was his Holiness too. By the one he achiev'd mighty Things, by the other he was able to bear the Heaviest. Thus, thus this mighty Man behav'd himself as to the general tenour of his Life; and in the worst Events he still retain'd his Greatness. I know not which of the Two shews the greatest Mind, *viz.* The bearing Prosperity handsomely and evenly, or Adversity patiently and courageously; but yet this I know, to wit, That the management of either is very Difficult, very Pertinent. The *Psal-*
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mist, in the words of my Text, speaks comfort to the Afflicted ; and doth in effect tell them, That though their worldly Concerns don't hit so luckily as they perhaps could wish and desire, yet still they should with confidence hold up their heads ; they should not be dismay'd or faint when the time of Adversity draws on ; but on the contrary, they ought to shew their Strength (if strength they have any) in their most gloomy state and condition. They should consider that Troubles may be appointed of God meerly for their Health ; that God is pleas'd sometimes to try them for a season : And if with submission and resignation they bear up, he may advance them quickly, and perhaps, even in this Life, give 'em a better Turn. But, if it shall be his Will and Pleasure that they must continue in Adversity to a full period of their Lives, yet here is room for comfort in the fiery Trial : This may be as a Preservative against impatience under it, namely, That though God's Wrath lies heavy upon them at present, yet it is but for the present, and in order to advance 'em to greater Glory in the other World. *Why art thou then so heavy, O my soul, or why art thou disquieted within me ? Endeavour*

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vour to provide thy self against the storms of this World; and that thou mayst do it effectually, put thy Trust in God. It is in vain to be dispirited when Afflictions do come, for they can do us no hurt, unless we permit. Moreover, they can endure but a very short time; they shall quickly vanish and be no more. But the after-Satisfaction and Reward for patiently abiding these things, shall be Immense and Eternal. And *heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.*

In the prosecution of these Words, I shall lay down Two Things, *viz.*

1. That the shortness of these worldly Afflictions should encourage us to the patient abiding 'em: *For they endure but for a night, the night of this World.*

2. That a Reward for our patient abiding these short Afflictions, shall soon overtake us; *joy cometh in the morning.*

1. Then, That the shortness of these worldly Afflictions, should encourage us to the patient abiding 'em.

The Royal *Psalmist* doth here acknowledge, That God's Corrections may be heavy upon his Servants for a season (for they sometimes fell heavy upon him, the chief of 'em) but then he is quickly re-

conciled : And for these his Corrections extends his infinite Mercies and Favours towards them ; he sends them deliverance so suddenly and seasonably , that the Troubles, in comparison to these his Favours, are as nothing ; or, to speak in his own phrase , are but as *heaviness that endures for a night, but joy cometh in the morning*. It's said here, that Heaviness may endure for a Night ; under which is implied, that it may not too. For God's Wrath doth not always reach to the utmost limits of this Life, but even here he has often-times rewarded his Peoples Patience ; he has given them some earnest of their future Glory. He has bestowed his Favours here in this Life, as some token of his unspeakable Mercy in the next. Let not then my Man of Sorrow be disquieted in vain ; but rather let him endure the sight of Afflictions like a man ; and if he has any Wisdom or Courage in him, I am sure he will do so. For these I take to be absolutely necessary to conduct him safe through the Troubles of this World.

And 1. For that of Wisdom. *Solomon* insists upon this in his Moral Discourses, as the main thing which we all ought to endeavour after. He himself prefers it before

before all other things. And indeed, what are they all without this? Let all things under the Sun be amassed together in order for our Happiness, and without this, they shall prove vanity. On the contrary, let them all conspire for our Hurt; let Troubles fall heavy upon us, yet, with this, they cannot harm us. Prosperity and Adversity are easily managed with it; but without it, either of 'em may prove our ruin. Riches, Honour, and Pleasure are nothing else, but Burthen and Vexation, if not govern'd by Wisdom. What do Riches profit, when a Fool is the Owner, one that knows not how to manage his substance? Do they not tend to his hurt? What signifies Honour to a man of no Understanding? How unseemly and awkward doth it sit upon him? How unbecoming, how upbraiding his Person? What fruit or benefit is there in Pleasure, the best of Pleasures which this World affords, if Wisdom has not an over-ruling hand? instead of recreating, we do but tire our selves in an empty pursuit; instead of Ease we find a Burden; and instead of Pleasure Vexation of Spirit. In a Word, look over the different kinds of things, which may be any ways instrumental to

make us happy here, and you shall find, that they all have their Virtue and Efficacy, they all depend upon this principal thing *Wisdom*. But what have we to do at present with Prosperity? It is Adversity (as I would shew) which so shrewdly proves our Wisdom.

Take Wisdom therefore in either of these three Senses, *viz.* Either in a Natural Sense, or a Moral, or a Christian, and you shall find that it has a mighty sway in the governing our selves in the day of Adversity.

And first for Natural Wisdom. How often have men (under God who gives them their Abilities) escap'd, or at least bore the hardest pressures by the strength of their natural Parts and Ingenuity? A politick Contrivance well laid and manag'd, has done wonders beyond any man's Imagination, besides his that wrought it.

Afflictions have laid so heavy upon a Man sometimes, that they have almost crush'd him to pieces; yet by setting his Head to work, he has, with much thinking and deep projecting, deliver'd himself out of all his Troubles: Whenas many others have sunk under a smaller weight purely for want of a common share

share of Wisdom. A good Foresight and sound Judgment of things, would have made a way to escape. But these they have wanted, and that has been their greatest Misery. Had not the want of these things been a block in their way, sure they would not have miscarried at that poor rate as they have, in time of danger. They would have had some remedy for their Distemper; and though they could not wholly ease their Shoulders of the Burden, they would apply some means to mitigate it, and make it lighter and more tolerable. It is said, that Hunger will whet a man's Fancy, and provoke him to Wit and Ingenuity. And why not any other Extremity as well as Hunger? Is there not the same Reason for one, as well as another? or indeed, in some cases, is there not much more? For instance: Is not good riddance of a vicious habit and corrupt inclinations more Satisfactory, than that of Hunger? Are not the gripes of Conscience more irksome than that of the Belly? Is not the welfare of the Soul more to be valued than that of the Carcase? Yes certainly. Therefore, a safe deliverance from Vice and a tormenting Conscience, by an hearty Repentance and sincere amend-

amendment of Life, is more necessary than the removal of Hunger, or an empty Stomach; and he that doth not think so, is a Brute, and worships no God so much as that of his own belly. To be pinch'd by Famine is indeed an afflictive Evil; but yet, this may have somewhat to mitigate its Pungency, to wit, a clear Conscience. So that, though the Man suffers in one capacity, he has a relief ready at hand in another; for in the midst of his extream need, his Conscience shall be a continual Feast. Besides, extream Need has often brought an evil Man to a good course of Life; and the Hardships and Mortifications of the Body, have oftentimes occasion'd the Soul's better plight. So then, though the Man may be in Heaviness through the burden of his Want, yet if he is not through the burden of his Sins too, he will be more able to look Death in the Face than thousands of others who have liv'd in Jollity, and Plenty, and Superfluity. But yet (to suppose the worst) if the extream Poverty be the natural Effect of his Sin, (as it often is) if the Man has been reduc'd to a starving condition, through the habit of Idleness, Luxury and Debauchery; then indeed his Grief will sit the heavier upon him;
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yet notwithstanding, this ought not to lead him to despair (for that drives him directly to the Devil) but rather make him strenuously resolve to set about the work of Repentance, and in the midst of Death heartily to provide for it. In short, into whatsoever Distress or bad Circumstance a man may be plung'd, whether it be into the Evil of Sin, or the Evil of Adversity, or both, I am sure a good standing Ability of Mind, is, for the most part, a true guide to direct him, that he turns not too much to the right Hand or to the Left. It will teach him not to be so Pusillanimous as to despond when he is Afflicted, nor yet so Presumptuous and Fool-hardy as not to fear and consider when Afflictions do reach him ; but his Hope and his Fear too will be consonant to the Rules of right Reason, which will enable him either to assuage the Tempest, or bear the same, let it rage and swell never so high. But, 2^{dly}, Take Wisdom in its moral Sense, and you shall find, That those who have had the greatest share of it, have been found the best able to bear their Adversity. The end which this proposeth, is Peace and Quiet as to our outward Condition ; inward Comfort and Satisfaction, and such a future

future State as the Light of Nature, abstracted from that of Christianity, has enabled the Wise and the Holy heretofore to believe and hope for. What great supports has Morality afforded them in the day of Trial and Affliction ! How have Moral Virtues, as Patience, Fortitude, Equanimity, and the like, taught 'em in the time of Old, to surmount the Evil of Afflictions with an undaunted Bravery, and encounter great and perilous Dangers that would have chill'd and damp'd their Spirits, did not the Wisdom of Philosophy obviate their Force ? Through this all murmurings, and repinings, and discontents at God's Providence, were cashier'd and eradicated by those Wise Heathens in all Ages, who have given us great Examples of their Magnanimity.

But if bare Morality will not advance us so far, as chearfully to bear our Afflictions ; sure Christianity may work such a blessed Effect upon us. Christianity reaches us greater things than ever we could learn from the Heathen Moralists. Neither *Aristotle*, nor *Plato*, nor *Socrates*, have benefited us by their Lectures, comparably to what Christ has done by his Doctrine, in a more noble and elevated Way. By this Wisdom of God we are
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made wise to Salvation. This is that which compleats all ; this is that which Crowns all. This is that Wisdom which shall effectually furnish us with good and honest Principles ; with such Principles as shall sufficiently qualify us to bear the worst Events with submission, as being all appointed of God. For we shall be apt to consider within our selves, and reflect, That there is no manner of Crosses and Afflictions that happen to the sons of Men, but, in the disposal of 'em, God has an over-ruling Hand. *Affliction* (as *Job* says) *doth not come forth of the dust, nor yet doth trouble spring out of the ground.* They don't come by blind Chance, but as they are ordain'd of God. The Lord gives it Men, and delivers 'em out of it, when his Almighty Wisdom shall see fit. If our Heavenly Father shall give us a bitter Cup to drink here, we must drink it, and leave the event to him. It's not our business to fret and gall our selves when he is pleased to hamper us with adversity, but to receive it with joy, and complacency, and satisfaction. We must kiss the hand that strikes us, and not struggle with him that can overwhelm us at his pleasure. A Christian must not think there is any false Reasoning in such
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Divine Aphorisms as these : *God rebuketh as many as he loveth. He chasteneth every son whom he receiveth.* If we endure Chastening, God dealeth with us as with Sons, as the Author to the *Hebrews* speaks in his 12th Chapter. These, and others such Texts of Holy Scripture, should move us to Humility and Resignation, and not to any rebellious insurrection and grievous resentment of Heart against God's Providence. The Apostle, *Rom. 9. 20.* doth sufficiently admonish us of our stupidity and sottishness in this case of repining at God ; where he says, *O man, who art thou that repliest against God ?* Who indeed ! For doth not he compare us to clay in the hands of the Potter, and by the very comparison egregiously upbraid us of our Folly in murmuring upon any Account ? For (says he) *shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus ?* No, never let it be said so ; but rather let the thing formed be contented with its Make ; and whether it be a vessel of Honour or Dishonour, let it not fly in the Face of its Maker. For to do thus, would be unpardonable Rebellion and Usurpation. Much of the same Form should we be with this proud lump of Clay, should we arrogate

to our selves so far as to ask God, Why hast thou done thus unto us? Why hast thou been more severe with us, than some others our Fellow-Mortals? Why should we come into more Misfortunes than other Folks, and be Plagu'd more than other Men? We are all equally the Workmanship of thy hand, and are all sprung from the same *Adam*, who by thee was form'd out of Earth; why then should Prosperity and Adversity make such difference between one lump of Earth and another? Such presumptuous questioning the Almighty, as this, is very irrational as well as impious; and demonstrates our Folly, but not his Partiality and Injustice. For, to stand by our own Confession, to wit, we are the workmanship of God's hand; and if so, sure we will allow God as much Power as we do our selves. The Potter (it seems) has power over his Clay. And shall not the Almighty Creator of Heaven and Earth be deem'd to have as much privilege over his Creatures, as the Potters of the Earth over theirs? Undoubtedly he must; and let him work us to what he pleaseth, let him dispense his Wrath to us to what degree or measure he will, he is still Unaccountable; and notwithstanding the clamorous dis-

discontents of the poor sons of Men, is Impartial in all his dealings, and Righteous in all his ways. To fret at our Misfortunes, or to sink under 'em, enhanseth our Misery ; but chearfully to bear 'em is the readiest way to remove 'em. Adversity is like a Snare, the more we struggle, the more we hamper and entangle our selves. God never strikes us, but it is for some Wise end, best known to himself ; but whatever be his Will and Purpose, it is the Wisdom of our Christianity that advanceth this seeming Paradox, and verifies it too, *viz.* the lower we fall, the higher we rise. For what are the tremendous Sufferings and glorious Martyrdoms of the Christian World, but the loud Eccho's of this Truth ? Patience is a noble Virtue ; but Wisdom is her Mother : For never did any one yet endure Adversity, but his Wisdom serv'd him to point out the way. Let sturdy Fools prate what they please ; let them magnify and applaud themselves too in their stupid Course, and value themselves for recoiling at God's Dispensations, yet a quiet acquiescence and resignation under em, would have spoke 'em wiser and better Men, whatever their pretences be.

But 2^{dly}, Courage is also necessary to
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the patient enduring our Afflictions. *Cicero* says in his first book of his Offices, that true Courage consists in two Things, *viz.* In bearing Prosperity and Adversity with an even Mind, and in doing great and difficult Exploits. But when I speak of Courage, I would not be thought to mean all such as goes under that Name, and is Courage only falsely so called. But I shall stand by *Cicero*, whom I just now mention'd. He says : *Omnino fortis animus, & magnus, duabus rebus maxime cernitur : quarum una in rerum externarum despicientiâ ponitur, cum persuasum sit nihil hominem nisi quod honestum decorumque sit, aut admirari, aut optare, aut expetere oportere : nullique neque homini, neque perturbationi animi, neque fortunæ succumbere. Altera est res, ut, cum ita sis affectus animo, res geras magnas illas quidem & maxime utilis, sed vehementer arduas plenasque laborum & periculorum cum vitæ, tum multarum rerum quæ ad vitam pertinent.* An excellent description of Magnanimity! And would every flattering, effeminate, repining Animal ruminat upon these Words of the good Heathen, I fancy it might in a great measure take him off from the complaining strain. Would every soft, self-admiring Beau, read *Cice-*

ro's Offices, I presume they might serve to teach him good Manners ; what they were, and wherein they consisted. He would then find that Manhood did not sit upon the surface, but was situated upon the Mind ; that Gentility is of a nobler Make, than to owe it self to fine Clothes and phantastick Mien, and that Philosophers, not Taylors or Barbers, are the Judges of it. To be Manly is to be Magnanimous, and to be Magnanimous is to be able to act and suffer with Wisdom as well as Hardiness, and upon an honest Cause to despise Dangers in a rational way. Let any one be such and he is Courageous, and not otherwise. Therefore I don't deem him Courageous who has run himself into great Dangers, by a stupid, incorrigible Boldness. No, such a one is far from being Valiant, whatever he may think of himself. A Man by a brutish Sturdiness may run himself into Dangers without any consideration of escape ; but inconsideration spoils the Valour. For it is not the bare doing great Exploits that denominates any one Valiant ; but the doing of 'em upon good and warrantable Grounds, upon honest and wise-Principles. A Fool by accident may speak Wisely, and a Coward may
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act bravely and manfully ; but yet, neither Wisdom nor Bravery shall be imputed to them, by reason that they did not proceed from any standing measure of Ability. A Fool in danger may hope to be deliver'd ; but how, he cannot tell. And indeed how should he ? For Reason was never his Counsellor ; Ways and Means were always strangers to him ; and consequently if he does escape, let him thank Chance, or some good Friend, and not himself. To run a risque without any humane probability of coming off, argues any one Rash but not Stout. Any such witless Creature may hope to be deliver'd ; but his very Hope is contrary to Reason ; and instead of being deliver'd out of his fool-hardy Mischief, he finds his Error, and in the upshot has labour'd much to destroy himself. Success indeed may dub the fool Valiant upon this score, in the eyes of the pitiful Vulgar ; but yet, let Wisdom be heard, and we shall find the Person still but a Fool, notwithstanding his Success. For Wisdom moves by Rules and Deductions ; it governs by direct and immediate Consequences, and keeps a man within the line of Duty, whatever the danger or trouble be that is to be Encounter'd. Valour stands up

on firmer and better Principles than to owe it self to Chance, for it is founded upon as rational a Basis as any thing whatsoever. Therefore we must not measure the Courage of a man by his Success. A Commander of an Army may be very brave and valiant in the Fight, and yet forc'd to flee upon the account of his Enemies number, or vantage-ground, or the like. A wise and honest Man, in the day of Adversity will bear the shock by patiently enduring the Evil, if no rational Expedient can be found to baffle the Misery. For though Wisdom and Courage are at hand, and the Man be in a readiness for a delivery, if occasion should shew it self; yet if it shall please God to continue the hard Trial upon him, and there appears no likelihood of a remedy, here it will be but a vain thing to attempt it; and, in this Sense, *hard will it be for him to kick against the pricks.* It is said, 1 Cor. 10. 13. *There has no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able: but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* The words of the Apostle hold good in nothing more than upon the account of

Danger

Danger and Adversity. God, it's said, will make a way for us to escape : But how, when, and by what measures he will bring it to pass, we must leave it to his Almighty Wisdom. 'Tis our business to bear it, since he has promised us Strength and Ability so to do. But to fret at Afflictions when there is no remedy, or to run headlong into worse, in order to avoid 'em, is an height of Stupidity that deserves little Pity or Commiseration. This is not that which Philosophers call Magnanimity, but Fool-hardiness. And we may say of our fool-hardy Men in respect of their Demeanour under fiery Trials, as the Prophet *Jeremy* complains of the wicked, Chap. 8. v. 6. *No man says, What have I done? Every one turneth to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battel.* Every one will be for taking his own course in the day of Trial, instead of resigning himself to God, and using those rational means that are warranted by him. Thus have Heathens heretofore and Christians now-a-days most wofully usurp'd upon God and Nature, when they have took upon themselves to be their own Carvers. Thus have they laid violent hands upon Nature in a blind notion of Courage, rather than

endure the fight of Afflictions. Such a man for Courage was *Cato* the *Uticensis*, who, scorning (it seems) to live when *Pompey* was overthrown by *Julius Cæsar*, very gravely (I won't say, wisely) killed himself. Had his Wisdom been but equal to his Gravity, I fancy the poor *Uticensis* might have seen *Cæsar* Triumphant, without such violent indignation with himself. What though he did think himself in danger upon *Cæsar's* Victory? Must he, upon that, destroy himself? No, no; this was strangely out of the way. This was like the fool or madman the *Epigramatist* speaks of, who out of the fear of Death ran himself upon Death:

*Hostem cùm fugerit, se Fannius ipse peremit.
Hic rogo, non furor est, ne moriari, mori?*

Had poor *Cato* been merciful to himself, he might have found mercy from *Cæsar* too, who was eminent for that as well as Valour. But had the mighty Warrior been never so cruel, better had it been for him to have perish'd by *Cæsar's* hands than his own; *Lucius Florus* commends him for so doing, and says it was a Fact worthy a wise Man: *Sed acceptâ partium Glade, nihil cunctatus; ut sapiente dignum erat,*

erat, mortem etiam lætus accivit. Such another for Courage was *Pomponius Atticus*, who, rather than endure a lingering Sickness, as *Cornelius Nepos* tells us, starv'd himself to death. He might have recover'd for ought that he knew, but he had not the Patience (I may say the Courage) to wait the event, therefore he dismiss'd himself. Had *Paulus L. Æmilius* the Roman Consul but had the presence of Mind becoming the Roman Dignity, as well as *Varro*, he had not despair'd at *Hannibal's* Conquest, but like a Man of a true Roman Valour, he would have liv'd in hopes to have seen the great General overthrown, as it afterwards came to pass. *Paulum puduit, Varro non desperavit*, Florus Lib. 2. Cap. 6. *Brutus* might have bemoan'd his Friend *Cassius* with a more manly Sorrow than that of Stabbing himself, or (which is all one as to the indecency of the fact) offering himself to be Stabbed by another, had some of the more noble Romans been to advise him. For thus says the aforecited *Florus* in his 7th Chapter of his 4th Book: *Brutus cum in Cassio etiam suum animum perdidisset, nequid ex constituti fide resignaret (ita enim per superesse bello convenerat) ipse quod uni comitum suorum confodiendum*

præbuit latus. And so we may blame the rest of those Heathens whom Histories stile Wise, Brave and Magnanimous, for being industrious in opposing their own Tranquility, and had rather take speedy shelter (as they think) in the horror of Night, than wait the coming of a more pleasant Day, which would have dawn'd upon 'em, even in this Life, for ought that they could tell, had they acquiesc'd, and with calm leisure expected the departure of the gloomy Season. So that the fine stories of these Heathen Heroes, amount to no more than this, *viz.* They courted Death with a fullen Bravery, only to be applauded by their Countrymen to Posterity. And this sort of Valour has been owing to some Sects of Philosophers, who have liv'd in the Ages before, and have countenanc'd Men to break through Nature's Bounds, by such a bold Usurpation. For what was the *Platonist's* Doctrine, but savouring of Pageantry, Boasting and Vain-Glory, when they taught that a man might cut the thread of Life to ease himself of his Misery? What were the *Stoicks*, but a proud surly Folk, who affected nothing so much as venting Paradoxes, and speaking big Things? They strutted in their
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proud Stupidity of denying the sense of Pain or Misery. Yet upon supposition they could, they thought they might remove themselves out of it at their Pleasure, by the expedient of Self-dispatch. But had these Philosophers been more serious and less Pedantick, they would certainly have taught the World a better Lesson. They would have then known that a Courageous Soul was under no necessity of courting Death to avoid Danger, Pain, Sickness, Disgrace and the like, but that he ought to endure 'em in their worst shape. For God has implanted in us a natural abhorrence of Self-Murder; and consequently that man must be strangely daring, that will violate such a standing, universal Rule. The Law of Nature is given us to support Nature, and warns us to avoid all such irrational, irregular Courses as do Violence to our selves. This Law supports our Beings every moment that we live, and is that alone which distinguishes the moral Man from the Brute. But though some Heathens have ill-befriended the World with their uncouth, unwarrantable Notions, yet others have afforded us a better Morality; and in their Writings we shall find such Precepts as
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will move us to the patient abiding our Afflictions, how severe soever they may seem. Let us consult the Histories of these good Heathens, and we shall find in this case, Examples sufficient to reproach us too. But since we are Christians we must excel Heathens in point of Magnanimity, as much as Christianity excels Morality. Christians are said to be Soldiers; and if Soldiers, they ought not to lack Courage. It is the Badge of their Profession to endure Afflictions, and bear the Cross for his sake who has shewed us the way, through his Triumphant Sufferings, by which he became the Author and Finisher of our Salvation. And what is it I wonder that shews a Christian, more than Courage? What have Christians in all Ages of Christianity been eminent for, more than for this? Nay, even before Christianity had any footing in the World, the best of Men were the most courageous too: Such were the Patriarchs and Prophets. But to particularize no more than one: What a glorious Example of this Nature was Holy *David*? What mighty Exploits did he perform? What Afflictions did he bear? How did he walk in the midst of Trouble, and yet still he waited patiently for the Lord?

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And he had good reason so to do ; for he knew that for this his Resignation, *joy should come in the morning.* We therefore who have the Gospel shining upon us, ought, in all strict obligation to our Lord and Master, so to bear up in all our Crosses of this Life, as People who have a ready dependance upon his Promise. For as God has appointed us a short and uncertain stay here, so he has not made it necessary that we should live in Affluence and Abundance, in Plenty and Prosperity ; for these things are apt to make us forget him that gave 'em. But this argues us to be of a slavish, beggarly Spirit, *viz.* That we can't have the heart and generosity to have any Affiance in God, till he has driven us into it by Want and Indigency : And we must be brought into great Fears and Troubles before we shall be made to seek the Lord. But this slow and dull apprehension of God, is not the worst that can be charg'd against some Christians ; for oftentimes, they are so far from throwing their dependance upon Him, as they should, in time of Adversity, that they have little, or mean, or scandalous Notions of him, or none at all. Instead of sitting down quietly, or submissively and contentedly, as being

ing under his Care and Protection, they kick at him that made 'em; they gall and fret themselves in a furious discontent, and double their Misery by adding Sin to their Afflictions. And this will be made appear, if we consider some common instances of Trouble that befall Men; such as Poverty, Disgrace, Misfortune of Relations, Death of Friends, and the like. These things have cast some Puny Souls into such Fear and Despair, that they have betook themselves to the Dagger, or the Halter, the Precipice, or the Water, or any other means that could do violence to Nature. But sure this *αὐτοκτενία*, this Valour in butchering ones own self, however it might have been commended by Heathens heretofore, and practised by some barbarous rude People to this day, yet it is to be abominated by all that pretend to profess Christ and his Holy Gospel. People in their melancholly Mood may fancy to themselves great things from Self-dispatch: As that they shall be quiet when once they have bid adieu to this World, and passed (as they may fondly think) into their Original and beloved nothing. But poor Souls! How dreadfully they mistake! I shake, I tremble! An horrid and gloomy
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Chilness seizeth my Spirits, and o'respreads my Blood, at the thoughts of such poor, forlorn Creatures, who can't endure God's Wrath, which, as the *Psalmist* speaks, endures but the twinkling of an Eye, but they must run the risque of throwing themselves out of the reach of his Mercy, and consign themselves over to a wretched Eternity. And this has been out of meer diffidence of God's Goodness towards them; which, had they rely'd upon, how quickly would all these external Miseries have clear'd up and shone bright and glorious to their unspeakable and endless Comfort? Poverty, Disgrace, Misfortunes of Relations and such like outward Evils which do happen to us in this Life, would have been sufficiently recompenced by the All-wise and Good God, who never leaves nor forsakes those who put their Trust in him. For through the mere strength of this mighty Support, have Christians in the Ages before, not only bore those ordinary Afflictions which are common to Men, but they have, with a Courage undaunted, held up their heads in the blackest Trials; with a chearful heart they have receiv'd their Agonies of Sorrow and Pain, and with a calm Countenance

nance have fac'd 'em to the very last. They have entertain'd the fiercest storms with an unshaken Vigour ; for they consider'd that this dark and sullen Night must quickly pass away, and then the joyful Morning of Eternity will spring forth, and present 'em with the pleasure of arriving safe to the Land of unspeakable Bliss, after their short but violent Shipwreck of this troublesome and peevish World. And this brings me to my 2d, and last Thing, *viz.* That a Reward for our patient abiding these short Afflictions, shall soon overtake us in the next World ; for it is said, *joy cometh in the morning.*

Despair would scarce be heard of amongst us, did we thoroughly consider what great ends the Almighty proposeth by sending his Afflictions upon us. We may harbour hard thoughts of his Wisdom ; but we should have little reason so to do, did we look further than what is usual. Afflictions then would be entertain'd with a better welcome by us, and we should not so much fear the Evil, as love and adore the Person who sends it. We would consider, that suffering upon the account of well-doing, will as certainly be Rewarded, as God is true. For St. Peter

ter says in his first Epistle, Chap. 2. v. 19, 20, 21. *This is thank-worthy, if a man for conscience towards God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? But if when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.* Say not then, O Man! that God deals unjustly or severely by thee by sending thee Adversity; for though, even for doing well, he sometimes lets loose his impious and cruel Men to plague thee at their pleasure, yet Patience under thy suffering shall bring it to a good effect, and crown thee in the end. For Prosperity here doth not necessarily attend a good and virtuous Life. For then Christ, instead of suffering the ignominious Death of the Cross, would have Triumph'd over his Enemies in a worldly and magnificent Manner. He that could have had Legions of Angels at his command, would not have been *led as a sheep to the slaughter*, but have sacrific'd all who stood in his way, had his Kingdom been of this World. But as it was not, it was his business to shew his Glory quite another

another way ; in a way that consisted in disowning and despising this World, and not in triumphing and glorying in it. He by whom all things were made, knew all things too. He knew that his heavenly Father had ordain'd that thus it should be ; that his eternally begotten, his beloved Son in whom he was well pleased, should not only take upon him the form of a Man, but that of a Servant too, for the sake of our Redemption. He knew that he must live a shameful Life, and dye a cursed death, before he should be Glorified. He joyfully endur'd the spight of Men and Devils ; for it was his Province to bear Afflictions, and his Delight to surmount them. By that, shewing how gloriously elevated we should be, could we but have the heart to follow him through the narrow and thorny way that leads to Everlasting Bliss. Would we but endeavour to surmount our Original selves, and put off the old Man with his Deeds, we should certainly think no Evil so burthenfome to us as that of our Sin. For we would reflect : That since our Saviour who had no Sin, could be contented to bear the burden of it by Suffering ; since he who made the World could willingly be the sacrifice for the sins of it, we are
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the most ingrate Creatures imaginable, if such an Example as this shall not work upon us so far, as to persuade us to endure our light Afflictions here, in order for our advancement in the other Life. Blessed Jesu ! That thou shouldest shew such wonders of Mercy and Goodness to the Children of Men ! That thou shouldest stoop so low as to take our humane Nature upon thee purely to suffer in it, that we thy sinful and rebellious Creatures should not perish but have everlasting Life ! This sure, O Blessed Lord, was thank-worthy, that thou shouldest descend from the Bosom of thy Father, thus to visit Mankind ! What is Man, *Lord, what is man, that thou art thus mindful of him !* Didst thou in thy Humanity conjoyn'd with thy Divinity, commiserate his Condition by Suffering for him ; and shall not he commiserate himself so far as to follow thy steps to the utmost of his Ability ? Yes, yes, he must, he will, if he has any kindness for his poor Soul, as well as gratitude to thee his Lord and Master. Well might *Job* assert, *that affliction comes not forth of the dust*, since it has thus been ordain'd of God even before the world began. God fore-knew that Man, the choice workmanship of his hands, was frail, and

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would be overpower'd, when his Adversary the grand Deluder was let loose upon him, and consequently that he would want a Saviour to atone for his Misdemeanor. And who should be constituted for this great Office, but the Eternal Son of his Bosom, God Blessed for ever? Down therefore came God, and in his Humanity did critically Live and Dye as was spoke of him by the Prophets. *A man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief.* Tell me then, ye sons of Affliction, what Plea or Pretence ye can have for your Murmurings and Complaints. For what saith the Scripture in this case? How read ye? Doth it not, as our good *Rubrick* speaks, administer Comfort to us as to this particular? Doth it not advise us, that we should patiently and with thanksgiving (as it is set down in the order for the Visitation of the Sick) bear our heavenly Father's Correction, whenever by any manner of Adversity it shall please his gracious Goodness to visit us? That there should be no greater Comfort to Christian Persons, than to be made like unto Christ by suffering patiently Adversities, Troubles and Sicknes? For he himself went not up to Joy, but first he suffered Pain; he entred not into his

his Glory, before he was Crucified : So truly our way to eternal Joy, is to suffer here with Christ ; and our door to enter into Eternal Life, is gladly to die with Christ, that we may rise again from Death, and dwell with him in Everlasting Life. Excellent Instruction this : And happy, unspeakably happy we, if we will but take the Admonition. Gladly to suffer Adversity, proclaims the Christian Hero, and mounts him far above other men. It argues his Constitution to be of a noble Make, and his Mind wonderfully sublime. By this the Sinner imitates his Saviour ; for in the main, this we are commanded, *viz. To take up the cross and follow him.*

But for the further prosecution of the thing in hand, *viz.* That our patient enduring Adversity in this World, advanceth us in the next ; I shall consider how Christianity in its right and proper Notion confirms the same. That Crosses, Afflictions, and Distresses are Blessings, is a Doctrine that was never allow'd of before Christ set his stamp upon it. 'Tis true, Afflictions, Persecutions and Death have been sturdily born by men of all Ages. Histories give us great Examples of hardy Minds ; but still these Men have

bore their hardships upon bad Grounds. They suffered either upon the poor, sandy Bottom of Fame, or upon some Philosophick Whimsey, or upon some scandalous, ridiculous Notion of God and Religion. But seldom or never could they fetch any solid and true comfort from their Sufferings, and turn their Miseries into Blessings. No, this was beyond the power of these hardy Souls. For such a glorious effect of Misery has proceeded only from the power of Christianity. Nay, further: It is not every one who will barely profess himself a Christian, and herd with the Flock of Christ, that can mount so far as to make good such seeming Paradoxes as these of the Apostle St. Paul, *As being sorrowful yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things,* 2 Cor. 6. 10. Let every one who professeth Christ's Gospel, live to the height of these words in their true and proper meaning, and I'll fairly pronounce him not only to be not of this World, but above it too. For, *being sorrowful yet alway rejoicing*, must be pure Nonsense, or a Contradiction, unless we take it as the Apostle spoke it, and consider him Triumphant in another World (as it were) whilst

whilst he was barbarously Treated in this. No doubt but the Apostle had the sense of feeling his Pain or Misery, in what measure soever it might be thrown upon him, as well as any one else: He could not be beaten with Rods, or Stoned, or suffer Shipwreck, and be in so many Perils, but it must needs be irksome to him. For why, he was neither Invulnerable nor Immortal; and though his Soul was out of the reach of his bloody Enemies, yet, without all peradventure, his Body suffer'd in doleful measure. Plain then it is, that St. *Paul's* rejoicing proceeded from some great and solid Satisfaction which he had in Prospect; and had he not had Heaven in his eye, I do verily think, that these worldly Afflictions would have sunk deeper into his Heart than they did. But as that was in his view, it lifted up his Soul; Afflictions by this lost their Sting, and became tolerable; nay, they chang'd their Hue so far as to become delectable; a Pleasure, a Blessing. For which Cause, (speaking of the Troubles and Persecutions which befell him for the sake of Christ) *We faint not (says he) but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction*

which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal, 2 Cor. 4. 16, 17, 18. And again, I have fought a good fight (says he) I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give me at that day: and not to me only but to all that love his appearing, 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. Time would fail me to cite all those Texts in Holy Scripture, which make for my business in hand; therefore I hope these few which I have mention'd, may suffice to admonish my Man of Sorrow, and be as a word in season to him. Let him look back into the Ages of Old, and reflect upon 'em with joy and comfort, that they have afforded so many glorious instances of Patience and Resignation. Let him suspect his own Wisdom when he finds himself in any harsh, murmuring Strain, and is nothing touch'd with the admirable Patience of so many wise and great Men heretofore. If they have endur'd such Tremendous Things, can't he bear those of a smal-

a smaller weight : If they have sung upon Racks, and laugh'd at Death, why should not he bear those less Evils that are incident to Mankind? For God never loads us beyond what we are able to bear; but still sends us such supplies of Comfort, that we may be able to receive the Weight, and surmount it too. The Holy Ghost works upon our Minds now as he did upon the Primitive Heroes; though perhaps, not in the same measure, and proportion. However, this may be a standing support to all that are in Trouble, that if they will not be wanting to themselves, God's Holy Spirit shall so strengthen them in their Conflicts, and impress such Vigor and Consolation upon 'em in their hard and fiery Trials, that this has been their mighty Effect, *viz.* They have served only to disintangle 'em from the things of this World, and by that given 'em a fair Title to the greater Glory in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Now to God the Father, &c.

P S A L. CI. 5.

*Whoſo privily ſlandereth his neighbour,
him will I cut off.*

IN this *Pſalm* we find *David* putting on a pious Reſolution of governing himſelf, his Court, his Kingdom, with all the care imaginable. He was reſolv'd to diſcountenance all manner of Impiety in his Palace ; and whatſoever Miſcreants there might poſſibly be in his Kingdom, he would take care that his Houſe ſhould be no ſhelter for them. And in order for the doing this to good Effect, we have him, through the whole courſe of this *Pſalm*, ſetting forth himſelf in a bright and glorious Manner , and proteſting againſt all Vices in general, and ſome in particular, which he knew would be dangerous to him and his whole Kingdom, when once crept into his Court. He ſaid, *he would behave himſelf wiſely in a perfect way ; he would walk within his houſe with a perfect heart. He would ſet no wicked thing before his eyes ; a froward heart ſhould*

should depart from him ; he would not know a wicked person. Then follow the words of my Text ; *Whoſo privily ſlandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off.* The words preceeding my Text amount to this : The King, in order to eſtabliſh purity of Manners and integrity of Life, makes it his buſineſs to be a ſample of Virtue and Piety to his Court by a perfect regulation of himſelf. And when his Royal Self was rectifi'd, then would he take upon him to animadvert upon his impious Domeſticks (if any ſuch he had) that were infamous for ſome peculiar Miſdemeanours, and would not tolerate them about him. There be four things, which, in this *Pſalm*, the Royal Prophet doth ſolemnly declare againſt, and reſolve to baniſh his Palace, *viz.* privy Slandering, an haughty Carriage, treacherous Cunning, and a lying Tongue. Every one of which, ſingly by it ſelf, is of a vile Malignity, but when in Conjunction (as God knows they often are) they will not only make a man intolerable in a King's Court, but in his Kingdom too. For a ſly Knave, who is wholly wrapt up in himſelf ; who neither ſeeks nor regards any ones Interſt but his own, is the Peſt of any Society as well as that of the Court. The clandeſtine,

stine Slanderer is a dangerous Villain ; by reason that he commits enormity against his Neighbour with plot and contrivance , with foresight and consideration , with a long thought of projected Malice, which must needs aggravate and enhance the Crime. And whereas others are palliated with precipitancy and inadvertency, passion and inconsideration, and the like, this of Slandering can have no such Plea , but is so purely Diabolical , that whatever may entitle us to be the Children of the Devil, I am sure this must. It's peculiarly Devilish ; for it's a compound of Malice and Lying , of which the Devil himself doth consist. A proud Carriage was another thing which the good King would not suffer in his Household. For let Pride sit paramount in Kings Palaces, and it is of a sad consequence. It threatens publick ruin, and presages dire events. When once countenanc'd by Authority, it becomes insatiable, and devours every thing that stands in its way. The Publick may shift for it self as long as the Proud Man can ride on without Controul ; with Triumph and Prosperity. Deceit and Lying were so odious to the King, that he would not endure the Person guilty of either of them,

them, to dwell in his House or tarry in his sight. Would to God every Prince, through the whole Universe, would imitate our Royal *David* so far, as to shake off such Vermin, in whatsoever Station, Quality or Degree they might swagger and domineer. Kings Palaces would then cease to be receptacles of sly Treachery and impious Falshood, of vile Cunning and Malicious Stratagem, and a Courtier would be distinguished from other men more by his Honour and Integrity, than his Pension and Retinue. Let Righteousness and Judgment be the habitation of the King's Throne, then will Peace be within his Walls, and Plenteousness within his Palaces. A righteous and a good Prince will discountenance all manner of foul dealing; especially in the place of his residence. For to countenance Ill-manners here would be dangerous. 'Twould be a Contagion that would quickly over-spread his Kingdom. 'Twould be like a Disease, that seizing the most vital Part of the Body Natural, is sure to be Mortal. A Sycophant is but a Beast of Prey wherever he is; but the Court makes him insatiable. A Shark will be sure to devour if he can; and here his Maw will not want Variety.

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Let the Pick-thank set sure-footing here, and he'll move the Kingdom to what he pleaseth. But this Holy *David* was aware of ; therefore he declares against any such Creature in this *Psalms*, and particularly the fly Slanderer , whom he says he will cut off. Cut off ! As how ? Why, he he will banish him his sight, discourage him in his Villany and bring him to condign Punishment. Though the words here spoke by *David* do modestly respect his Domesticks, yet they may be supposed to be of that universal Extent as to time and place, that in their due and proper meaning they must comprehend all Ages, and Governments, and Persons whatsoever. Every Governour , every Person in his station is bound to animadvert upon the Slanderer to the utmost of his Power. A Slanderer is a publick Nuisance, and ought to be discountenanc'd by all who have any sense of Honour, Honesty or Good-Nature. But before I do proceed any farther, I think it necessary to premise this, *viz.* That Cutting off in this place of Scripture is in the Septuagint-Version rendred by Expulsion; the word is ἐξεδίωξον, from ἐκδιώκο, *expello*, from the simple Verb διώκο, which we render, *to persecute* , *to put to flight*, *to fol-*

follow after, to pursue. So then, to be cut off here is not, I presume, to be taken in its precise meaning, so, as to be destroyed by Death, as it is in some places of Scripture; but the words do, I conceive, carry in 'em this construction, as if the King had spoke thus: Whofo by way of clandestine Revenge, doth vilify his Neighbour by his foul, lying Tongue, incurs my Displeasure, and shall be prosecuted, cashier'd and discourag'd by me for such his disingenuous Dealing, by all the means that possibly I can use. Now, though the words were spoke by *David*, yet, as he was a Prophet, as well as a King, we must consider 'em in their Virtue, Power and Efficacy, as an wholesome Admonition to us, to discourage and discountenance a Slanderer. So then in the handling of these Words, I shall consider two Things chiefly.

1. The Malignity of this Sin of *privily slandering ones neighbour.*

2. The Effect of such a vile Practice as *privily slandering ones neighbour*, viz. *it is to be cut off.*

1. Then for the Malignity of this Sin of *privily slandering ones neighbour.*

Some Sins go barefac'd in the World and though in themselves really Scandalous
and

and Odious, yet they have had their Abettors. But Slandering carries with it such a cursed, fulsome aspect, that none will own the Sin. Though some Sins dare the World in open defiance, yet this lurks and sneaks its head; for it consists of such a monstrous obliquity and dissingenuity, that Humane Nature, as deprav'd as it is, has not as yet, even in these dregs of time, so suffer'd in its depravation, but that it shall disown the Crime, how rise soever the Practice of it may be. Even Custom, which patronizeth other Criminals in their boasting, forsakes the Slanderer here and disowns him. And whether it be the pure malignity of the Sin, as being a Compound of such diabolical proceedings; or whether it be its Monstrosity, as consisting of such uncouth, dissingenuous Workings, that dissuades every one from professing himself such, I know not; but this I am assured of, that a total disowning the practice of it, is an Argument that Humane Nature doth recoil at it; and what Humane Nature doth thus universally recoil at, and abominate, must have somewhat in it that is truly odious and scandalous.

Had it not been of an ugly Hue, King *David*, I think, would scarce have given it

it such vile Concomitants, as Pride, Deceit and Lying. But yet as these may be distinct Sins from Slander, yet they often are couch'd under it and involv'd in it ; and you shall seldom or never find a Slanderer, but what is Proud, a Lyar and Deceitful. For do but consider the end of privily slandering ones Neighbour, and you shall find it is to ruin him as to his good Name. It's possible I may commit a slander upon my Neighbour unawares, unwillingly, inconsiderately or passionately ; yet, when I do privily transgress against him , I am by a great deal the more vile and rancorous Enemy of the two. I know my rashness and inadvertency don't wholly take away the Guilt, however they may extenuate it ; but I know also that my doing it clandestinely doth more egregiously speak my want of Charity. For the vile intention of the Person enhanseth the Crime ; and though a good Intention will not suffice for a good Action, yet a vile Intention doth for an Evil one, according to the elevated Doctrine of Christ's-School. Otherwise, he that lusteth after a Woman in his Heart only, can be no Adulterer. But we find, that not only he that actually defiles his Neighbour's bed, but he
that

that is wanton in very thought, is in his holy Gospel pronounc'd one. I don't say that an evil Intention, separated from the act, is of equal malignity with actual Transgression; yet I do aver, that an evil Intention when seconded by Action, doth serve to enhance the Crime. And this holds in respect of Murder, by the the Verdict of our Common-Law. Homicide, which is a general word for Murder, may be understood in the act of Chance-Medley, as well as in that of wilful Murder; yet there is none so ignorant, but that he must own a wide difference between the fact of the one and the other. Even so much disparity is there in these two Actions, that one is a Moral Evil, whenas the other is not; and that which occasions this disparity is the evil intention of the Agent, by malice prepense or premeditated. A man may be as really Murder'd by the falling of a stone off a house from the Mason's hands, as if he was stabb'd with as many Wounds, as *Julius Cæsar* was. In some measure we may say of Slandering, which is nothing else but a Murdering a man in his Reputation; In some measure I say, this sort of Murder (for the comparison of the one with the other will not altogether hold,

hold, by reason that all Slandering is a Sin, though all Homicide, in niceness of Speech, is not so) may be extenuated as to its Fact. For instance : I may in a jest, or through inadvertency, or through some little pitiful Humour, chatter away my Neighbour's Reputation (as is common with saucy, petulant Fools, who are always prying into other Folks, and do never consider themselves) in the multitude of my Words, yet I do not take this sort of Slandering to be altogether so heinous, as that of vilifying him in a sly, privy manner. Though by the way, this pert, petulant sort of Slandering is a scandalous thing, and ought not to be suffer'd in any civil Society, whatever Sycophants and Buffoons may think of it. In discoursing of this Sin, I shall not run into its different branches, but shall only endeavour to set forth the odiousness of it, in such general terms as may give us insight into the nature of it. Therefore, for the further prosecution of my Text, I shall mention two Things from which this Sin may proceed, *viz.* Ill-Nature, and Impotency of Nature. Let these Lineaments be drawn to the Life, and we may quickly view the Slanderer's Picture in its full Deformity,

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whenever we will be pleas'd to cast but half an Eye.

1. Then for Ill-Nature. The end of slandering is (as I have already hinted) to take away a man's Reputation. And this is signified from a general word used by us for Slander, *viz.* Detraction. Now detraction, in its proper Etymology, denotes a drawing off from a thing, and when it respects Reputation, it signifies a lessening a Person in his good Name. The word is prettily adapted to this meaning. For it's certain I can't draw or take ought from a thing, whether we apply the Phrase in a natural or moral Sense, but I must be said to lessen and diminish that thing which I do take from. If I by Slander take from a man's Reputation, I do lessen him in point of Reputation; and if I do thus lessen him in a fly, clandestine way, I must have some end for thus prevaricating with my Neighbour. Now what can this end be, but to magnify and advance my self, and diminish his Fame and Credit, who otherwise would be far above me; would be more esteem'd and look'd upon, by all Wise, Honest and Sober Men? "I my self
"have crack'd my own Credit, and so I
"will that of my Neighbour if I can,
"by

“ by blaspheming him, and rendring him
“ Odious in the sight of all Men, by my
“ false Tongue. I hate to see him reve-
“ renc’d and admir’d for his unspotted
“ Life and Conversation. Let him be
“ never so Innocent, I’ll blacken him if
“ I can. I’ll so disguise him in the eye of
“ the World, by my evil speaking and
“ false surmising, that was the man never
“ so Honest, never so great a Saint, I’ll
“ paint him a Devil. Moreover, I’ll do
“ this with all the Cunning and Strata-
“ gem I am able. I won’t rail at him in
“ a drunken fit, or rave against him in
“ an angry, testy Mood, but I’ll throw
“ my Venom at him in a sober, serious
“ Manner. I’ll wipe my mouth, and look
“ Demurely, I’ll shake my Head, and up-
“ lift mine eyes to Heaven, as if I scorn’d
“ to falsify, and meant no harm to the
“ Man whom I design to ruin by a secret
“ Blow. I’ll so whisper it and surmize
“ it, that I’ll make even Wise and Honest
“ Men believe my Report, though what
“ I am relating, is as false as Hell, and
“ as devilish a Lye as can be hatch’d by
“ man. Thus when I have done what in
“ me lies, to propagate my Report in a
“ sly way, and the Slander rolls and
“ tumbles from one Sycophant to another,

“ infomuch, that it has reach'd the Ears
“ of all, both high and low, I'll fit me
“ down and laugh within my self, rest
“ pleas'd with what I have done, and
“ Devil-like glut my Appetite with this
“ notable, this great Revenge upon my
“ poor innocent Neighbour. Let but
every flandering back biting Sycophant
say if he can, that these or such like
Words don't answer his ugly Temper as
face doth face in a Glafs. What a dismal
thing is Ill-Nature then, that it can
thus transform (as it were) a man out
of his own Shape? That it should thus
ravish him from his own Kind, by prompting
him to commit that villany against
his Neighbour, which goes against the
grain of common Humanity to practise?
But when Ill-Nature gets footing in our
Breasts, the Lord knows to what vile and
unworthy Things it may hurry us. It
seems strange to me, that such a filthy
Sin as this is, should be so commonly
practis'd by those Men, who in other
things, can stand upon the terms of
Honour as much as any, but yet to this
so mean, so beggarly a Vice, are mighty
prone. To be pronounc'd a Lyar deserves
a stab with some little, silly phantastick
Heroes of our Age; but if they
will

will not be pronounc'd Lyars, let them have a care of being such ; for he that is a Slanderer is a Lyar, and a malicious Lyar too, which is the worse sort. It seems somewhat like riddle, that Slandering should be so generally disown'd, and yet so generally practis'd. Even the poorest, the meanest, the vilest Person breathing, will not acknowledge himself a Slanderer, although he is one at the same time. But it is not the mean man alone, but the mighty man too (or at least that is so in the eyes of the Vulgar) that may be a Slanderer, or *David* sure need not to have so solemnly profess'd how he would animadvert upon such in his own House. The Court may afford such an impious Creature, as well as the Dunghil. But whoever he be, let him be animadverted upon. Let him know that he does his Neighbour the greatest mischief with malice and design, that possibly he can, who privily takes away the most valuable thing belonging to him, viz. his good Name. For Riches and Life are but a burthen without her ; and he that will be such a barbarous Sycophant as privily to stab a man in his Reputation by his false Tongue, I doubt not but that when time should serve, he would as wil-

lingly strike a dagger into his Heart. An ill-natur'd Man may want power or opportunity to exert his Malice in taking away his Neighbour's Life, but not in depriving him of his good Name. This still lies obnoxious to his Rage; for there is no fence against a venomous Tongue. The Coward can here shew his Anger, though otherwise he dares not shew his Face. Of all the evil machinations that Malice and Ill-Nature can produce, certainly this of privy Slandering is the most deadly, the most effectual. For could we but rate the Miseries and Misfortunes that have befall Kingdoms, Families, Persons publick and private, through this Sin, it would make us tremble at the very mention of 'em. But I shall not betake my self to so large a Compass: Yet this I shall say, that Slandering now is grown to that high pitch, that it would be well if private Persons were the only sufferers through the Tongues of malicious and ill-natur'd Men. But this is not so; for they are very daring and open-mouth'd against our Governors too. Nay, even Kings themselves don't escape their foul Mouths, so devilishly are they bent to walk with Slanders. They shall rake up the very ashes of the Dead, rather than

than want prey to work upon. They may imagine that railing at this or that Party, pulling and worrying them, may speak 'em Loyal of course: But if they who are most given to bitter railings and accusations, would be so Wise as to keep their Tongues from reviling Kings too, perhaps they might colour over their lewd Principles better than now they do. These base men shall despise Dominion, and speak evil of Dignities; whenas we read in Holy Writ, *That Michael the Arch-angel durst not bring, even against the Devil, a railing accusation.* Why not? The Devil was but a Calumniator himself, and if the Arch-angel had rail'd at him, he had given him but his due; and if he had accused the Accuser, where had been the inconsistency? Why, in this: It was beneath the Dignity, and contrary to the Holiness of an Angelical Spirit, to give reproachful Language upon any account; therefore he delivers him over to God his Revenger, for says Holy Text, *The Lord rebuke thee.* But who shall stop this ill humour of the Tongue, I know not, unless our Governours will be pleas'd to put the Laws in force against slandering, especially the most impudent of all sorts of Slandering, viz. The speaking evil of Dig-

nities. I hope, though there is Liberty of Conscience, the Liberty of the Tongue may, in some measure, be restrain'd; for if not, I verily think, Ill-language will be but the fore-runner of greater Mischiefs. For, you know, *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh*: And when once the Fire is kindled, the Lord knows where it will stop, unless God and our Governours shall prevent these foul-mouth'd, daring People in their fiery Career.

No wonder, that they, who dare revile Kings and other Governours, dare spit their Venom in vilifying their private Neighbours too. But privy Slandering, wheresoever or howsoever it may strike, doth still proceed from the same Spring, to wit, Ill-Nature. An ill-natur'd Man can't contain his Anger, but he flings it at all. He is an exception from other Mortals; he sins without Provocation, without Temptation. To see his Neighbour flourish, thrive and belov'd, is Death to him. He Languishes and Expires, when he sees another more caress'd and esteem'd than his poor, pining Self; and that which would be another's Joy and Divertisement, is his Plague and Torment. His Breast swells with Rancour,
and

and he would think it in danger of bursting too, had it not its Vent in some manner; not by advancing himself to a better Plight, but through his slanderous Tongue, by pulling down his Neighbour as low as he can. Speak, thou malicious, envious Sycophant, speak what it is that prompts thee to be thus strangely Diabolical. Has not God given thee Ability to resist the Devil and all his Works, as well as others thy Fellow-Creatures? Hast not thou an Understanding and Will capable of eschewing Evil and doing Good, as well as the rest of thy Humane Kind? Certainly thou hast. Therefore whatsoever thy Nature be, however it may be corrupted, I would have thee know, it has been so, purely from thy self; from thy yielding to the fraud of the Tempter, and the instigation of thy Lusts and Passions. For God has necessitated no man to be Wicked, though he has given every one a liberty to accept or refuse his Grace. Ill-Nature was never implanted in thee, but has grown upon thee and been fomented by thee. Thou wast not born Ill-Natur'd, but thou hast made thy self such, by giving way from time to time to thy cruel and unruly Passions, such as Pride, Envy, Malice
and

and Revenge. These, these, through a long reception and habituated Entertainment, have made thee ill-natur'd, and thy Ill-Nature has commenc'd thee Slanderer.

But 2^{ly}. Privy Slandering may proceed from Impotency of Nature. Impotency of Nature is a word of a large extent, and has many different ways of shewing it self ; but when it respects Discourse, we can't explain our selves by a more significant and comprehensive word than that of Futility, from *futilitas*, which signifies Lightness, or foolish Babbling. The word, I deem, may have some allusion to the vessel called Futile, used in the Sacrifice of *Vesta*, of that narrow bottom that it could not stand, but was forc'd to be held up. Thus say, A man is Futile, and (by alluding to a vessel) you call him a leaking, vain dissolute Fellow : A crack'd Vessel ; he still leaks and runs out. To this, the Sycophant *Parmeno* in *Terence* doth allude, when he says, *Plenus rimarum sum, hac atque illac perfluo*. I'm full of chinks, I run out every where. So may every chattering, empty, talkative Man say, Whatever I hear, out it goes ; I can contain nothing. Whatever is told me, let it be true or false, I care not, I'll propagate the Relation ; and
if

if I ruin my Neighbour by it, so be it ; it's nothing to me, as long as I can exercise the itching humour of my devilish Tongue. Thus shall the Sycophant be readily prepar'd to vilify his Neighbour in any Company, and his mighty Clack is ever in due motion for this purpose. And whether it be to humour a Patron, or to please a Company as ridiculous as himself, or purely to ridicule the Person, or all of these, I can't tell ; but yet this I know, that his petulant tongue may occasion more mischief to his Neighbour in his Reputation, than either he or his Company will or ever can repair. Sad Misfortune this ! That the good name of every Person should stand upon such a slippery bottom, as to lye obnoxious to the Will of every idle, beggarly, ill-natur'd Fellow, who can sport himself when he lists, to the utter ruin and destruction of his Neighbour's Fame and Credit. But speaking of the Futile Person, I shall remark this of him, *viz.* That as it is his Weakness to vent all he hears, so it is his Vanity to hear all he can. And he that will hear all and still relate all, must have strange luck if he is not a Lyar. For though I'll own it is possible (and indeed that's all) that a Person may be
Futile,

futile, a Babbler, and yet not a Lyar, (for Futility consists in speaking what I hear, not in relating what is false) yet by the way, it will be hard, very hard to imagine how such a whiffing Man should always dwell upon the confines of Truth, and not trespass by Falshood. Therefore all that can be said in this case, is the Fool's Fortune to hear no Lies, and that's the reason that he tells none. If such a one speaks Truth, it is not from the prevalency of an over-ruling Conscience, or good Intention, but from meer chance. And this is the utmost that can be said of such a Wretch. But yet if we will narrowly look into the nature of this sort of impotency in man, we shall find that a futile Person is so far from being wholly Innocent in respect of slandering his Neighbour, that Slandering is generally his practice, his business. But when I speak of the futile, babbling Sy-cophant, I would not be thought to mean only the Beggar, who shall cringe, sneak and fawn like a Dog for a Meal's Meat, but I mean all chattering, backbiting Sharks, of what Order or Quality soever they be; that all People, who have any Principles of Honesty, or Grains of Good-Nature, may Ken 'em so far as to be

be able to avoid 'em. When they creep into Company (as such Vermin are generally more bold than welcome, and are continually thrusting themselves into all they can) they may, perchance, enchant and lead Captive those who are as pitiful as themselves, and as prone to believe a false Report, as they are to relate it ; but let 'em not over-shoot their mark by Thinking to ensnare the Sober, the Thinking, the Wise and the Well-meaning of the World, with their petulancy and impertinency. For they can't cloak their Malice under their fair pretence of Mirth and Jollity ; their laughing and grinning will not serve to take away an ill meaning ; no, nor yet to hide it. And he that plays away another's good Name in his Mirth, may be as great an Enemy to him, as if he had undermin'd him with all the serious projected Cunning and Treachery that can be invented. *Solomon* says in his *Proverbs*, Chap. 10. 19. *In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin.* I presume he meant, there seldom wants the sin of Lying and Slandering. This is intended, or, at least, may very well be supposed. For the wise Man in the Text preceeding, corrects the malicious Dissimulator and sly Slanderer ; for
(says

(says he) *he that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, is a fool.* And then goes on, *In the multitude of words, &c.* The words do certainly respect much speaking, and are no more than if he had said, A saucy, petulant, talkative Person, shall not be Innocent. And how should he? For his very Petulancy is a crime; but if attended with Slandering, it is an intolerable burthen to any civilized Company whatsoever. But in the 10th Chapter of his *Ecclesiastes* and v. 11th, he is more to my purpose. He says, *a serpent will bite without enchantment, and a babbler is no better.* Would to God every babbling Slanderer would ruminare upon these Words, and comment a little upon the Text. Nay, I think, if he is not a Fool as well as a Slanderer, he will too. For certainly they carry in 'em vast Weight, Shrewdness and Solidity, and do serve to admonish him of the heinousness of any such vile Practice. But speaking of Slandering, as it may proceed from futile, babbling Discourse, I shall consider what it is that induceth a man to this Sin. I shall just mention two Things which do very much tend to the propagating and promoting this slippery Vice of the Tongue,
viz.

viz. 1. Idleness. 2^{dly}, Vain Curiosity.

1. For Idleness.

We may say of our Slanderers, as St. Paul speaks of the younger Widows in his days, 1 Tim. 5. 13. *They learn to be idle, wandring about from house to house; and not only idle, but tatlers also, and busy-bodies, speaking things which they ought not.* Sure these were the weaker sort of that weaker Vessel, whom the Apostle describes here; and in rank and dignity the meaner sort too. For to apply the Text to our Female Hectors now-a-days would be thought daring, presumptuous and impertinent. Our Women of Quality, Birth, and Honour, scorn to be Gossips and Tatlers, Busy-Bodies and Evil-Speakers, either by way of Calumny or Obscenity. They are above these poor, mean, scandalous Vices. I wish they were. Then they would be above ('tis to be hop'd) the encouraging and entertaining those little Creatures of their own Sex, who are infamous for these and such like Miscarriages. We commonly say the Receiver is as bad as the Thief. If our Ladies will receive Gossips as their Companions, let 'em not be angry if they themselves are thought such.

But

But since the weaker Sex doth not engross all the weakness in the World to it self; since we have Men who do not only imitate the Women in their Speech, Mien and Gesture, but in their Vices too, I think we may very fairly turn the Stream, and apply the Words of the Apostle to them. And if men will be Idle, and wandring from House to House, no wonder we find them Tatlers, Busy-Bodies and Calumniators. That which induceth us to be impertinent in looking into other mens Affairs, occasions us to talk of 'em too. And when once we come to be over-busy in discoursing of our Neighbours, it's great odds but we trespass upon them. St. James says, *The tongue is an unruly evil; full of deadly poison.* But never doth it more fully answer this Character, than when we let it run at rovers, and take its range in Lying and Blaspheming. He that doubts of the truth of this, may easily be satisfied, if he will be pleas'd to inspect our common Societies; wherein we may find 'em so burthen'd with Calumny, Sauciness and Ill-breeding, that it would make us loathe the very thoughts of being Sociable, was Society in its genuine Notion, no better than as we receive it in its Corruption.

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I don't take Idleness to consist only in a total cessation of Acting (for the most Idle are, in a wrong sense, commonly the most busy) but it may consist also in a childish, pragmatikal doing things which we ought not, as well as speaking so. Thus when we see a Man forsake his Calling, his Trade and Employment, to follow Vanities which may prove his Bane, and (in a word) turns his time to a wrong account, we say he is an idle Man; and to all intents he may as well be said to throw away his time as that silly vicious Emperor *Domitian*, who could neglect the grand business of his Empire, to betake himself to the notable Exercise of catching Flies. Thus when we find a man in his Discourse to fly at random, and to vent his pitiful Ribaldry whatever it be, we say he talks and prates like an idle shallow Fellow. If he be Atheistical, Obscene, or Defamatory, or the like, he must needs be a great burthen to his Hearers, if they have any Wisdom, Honour or Conscience in 'em. For to bear with such nasty, witless Buffoons, and Pick-thanks, must needs be very tedious and irksome. He that hears such Men talk, if he were to search 'em at bottom, would find 'em not only Idle but

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Idiots

Idiots too. But *Noscimur ex sociis*. That Man who associates himself with such impious, whiffling Sots, runs the risque of being thought like unto them. If I'll herd my self with Thieves and Highway-men, I'm not only in danger of losing my Reputation but my Life too. Therefore I shall not advise any Honest Man to try Experience so far as to keep company with such idle Talkers in order to reduce 'em, unless they would give him a better taste of their Natures and Principles than generally they do. But 2dly, Vain Curiosity is another thing that doth induce Men privily to slander their Neighbours.

When we consider that this Curiosity has led Men on pertly and without Fear or Wit, to pry into God's Decrees, and the secrets of his Wisdom, we need not so much wonder that they make bold with their Fellow-Creatures. He that dares Blaspheme his Maker by his false Notions and Misapprehensions of him, will not, I think, forbear to exercise his Talent upon his Neighbour. And whether it be God, his Neighbour, or both, whom he thus trespasseth upon, it matters not with him, as long as he can any ways feed this insatiable faculty of his.

But

But I shall not here discourse of this Curiosity which respects God, by reason extraneous to the subject in hand; therefore I shall hint upon it only as it has relation to Man. This *aliena curare*, to be impertinently and pragmatically meddling or curious, is nothing else but the fore-runner of Slandering. For Slanders are generally Spies. It's their business to mark what is said or done, in order to be true Pick-thanks. They must have some Materials to work upon, before they can vent their Forgeries and Lies with Art and Discretion, and commence Slanders of the first Form. The word *Curiosus* as it is taken in this meaning, may have the same sense as *Delator*, an Informer, a secret Accuser. But we shall not be nice upon the word, but shall take it in that general Notion as to signify any impertinent Fellow, who makes it his business to pry into other mens Affairs, in order first to find faults, and then to vilify their Persons with all the aggravating Circumstances that Malice and Ill-Nature can possibly invent and suggest. A Slanderer would make but a dull trade on't, was he purely to invent every Lye he reports. But this need not be. No, if he can have a Lye at

second hand, it may make for his business as well, or rather better, than if he had the Credit of inventing it himself. For a known, scandalous Lyar, who is so much upon the forlorn hope, as neither to be believed nor trusted by any, may yet, by the help of anothers Attestation, be able to propagate a Lye so far as to make it pass for currant. For why, Gentlemen (says the Slanderer) you hear what this Man says, as touching the thing I was speaking of, who ye all deem to be an honest Man, a man of Honour, and one who scorns to Lye or to Falsify upon any account. Ah! but Friend, thy honest Man, thy Man of Honour doth not scorn it; for I'll make him know that if he will scorn to Lye, he will scorn to speak at random; and if he will be a true Speaker, he must be certain that what he doth speak is true. But how often have our common Reports passed for Truths, which have been related by these our men of Honour, that are so far from being grounded upon Demonstration, or certain Evidence, that they stand upon the poor bottom of Jealousy, or Suspicion, or Surmise, or perhaps none of these, but have been downright Lyes, invented by some barbarous Villains

Villains to raise themselves, and depreciate their Neighbours ? Sometimes a man shall be condemn'd even for his very Look. A bashful, unsteady Countenance shall be sure to be construed in the worst sense, by some whiffling men, who make it their business to descant upon Faces ; though, if they would but look into their Glasses, they would find they have miserably forgot their own ; or at least are so partial to themselves, as to over-look those strange Fleers and unwonted Casts of Countenance, which they can no more avoid shewing the World, than they can themselves. But we can give no firm, standing Judgment of a man from his bare Front. We can draw no certain, direct and consequential Knowledge of his Nature from his surface and meer outward appearance ; and he is a Fool of a Physiognomist that pretends to the skill, and deserves to be hiss'd at more than to be rely'd upon. But I think our curious Sy-cophants are too prone to judge hardly of their Neighbours from their outward appearance, or they would not vilify em at that poor, pitiful rate as they do, whenas they have no knowledge of em. I may see a man often, and be in his company, and yet be a stranger to his Temper

and his Humour. I may survey him from without, and yet be never able to reach his Heart so far as to dive into it. For every man that will deign me his company, will not make me his Bosom Friend, his Confident; so that what I report of him, I must be morally certain it is true; but I ought not to relate dogmatically and peremptorily, upon Conjecture, or Suspicion, or Jealousy, or Surmise; for if I do, let the thing in it self be true or false which I speak, I'm sure to be a Lyar. I'm afraid that many of our slanderous Reports owe their Original to such sandy foundations. But whosoever is curious in this vile way, let him have his due; *let him be cut off*. I'm come therefore to my 2d and last thing, the effect of such a vile Practice, as privily slandering ones Neighbour; it is, *to be cut off*.

The Cutting off here (as I have said) doth not import Death, yet I question not but that privy Slandering may deserve it as much as most Crimes, in respect of the extent of the Mischief which is occasion'd by it. The Lord *Verulam*, in his Wisdom of the Ancients, mentions, as an old Fable, the Sister of the Giants called *Fame*. The Fiction
runs

runs thus : " It is a Poetical Relation
 " (fays he) that the Giants begotten of
 " the Earth, made War upon *Jupiter* and
 " the other gods ; and by the force of
 " Lightning they were resisted and over-
 " thrown. Whereat the Earth being ex-
 " cited to Wrath in Revenge of her
 " Children , brought forth *Fame* , the
 " youngest Sister of the Giants." He ex-
 " plains the Fable on this manner : " By the
 " Earth is signified the Nature of the Vul-
 " gar, always swoln and malignant, and
 " still broaching new scandals against Supe-
 " riors, and, having got fit opportunity,
 " stirs up Rebels and seditious Persons, that
 " with impious Courage do molest Princes,
 " and endeavour to subvert their Estates ;
 " but being suppress'd, the same Natural Dis-
 " position of the People still leaning to the
 " viler sort, (being impatient of Peace
 " and Tranquility) spread Rumours, raise
 " malicious Slanders, repining Whisperings,
 " infamous Libels, and others of that kind,
 " to the detraction of them that are in Au-
 " thority : so as Rebellious Actions, and
 " seditious Reports, differ nothing in kind
 " and Blood, but as it were in Sex only ;
 " the one sort being Masculine, and the
 " other Feminine. " Thus that Lord. The
 Words do hint to us, of what dangerous

Consequence Slandering may be, that can give such an universal and deadly Wound as to set States in Combustion. Rebellion is a cursed sin, but Slandering is that which begets it.

Rebellion would move on but lamely did not Evil Speaking serve to support and foment it. Rebellion, even now, works by the same means as it did when it first entered the World. It crept into Paradise through a Lye, and false Suggestion, and it still holds its ground by the same Tenour. For, *eat and ye shall not surely die*, says the Devil in the Serpent, to the Woman; ye shall be so far from dying, *that ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil*. The insinuation of the Tempter, and the pleasantness of the Tree, took with the Woman; *for she did eat*, as Holy Text says, *and gave to her husband*. But dire was the effect of this Rebellion; for the Man and Woman by it became Miserable, and so did their Posterity. Now this Misery was introduced by a Lye. For the Devil saying the blessed Pair should be yet more Blessed for eating of the Tree forbidden, was, indeed, Blaspheming God, and, in effect, telling *Eve*, he would not be as good as his Word, or at least could not prevent their

their Happiness by thus their Eating. Thus as Rebellion was first usher'd in by Falshood, so it is still propagated by the same. If a man will be a Rebel to the purpose, it is his business to whet his Tongue before he whets his Sword against Authority. He will speak smooth things as well as false, in order to compass his end, and cajole the Mobile the same time that he reviles his Governors. He will murmur and whine, and cant, and invoke his God in a formal manner, but he will work his Dissimulation to some notable effect, and Patriot-like, so glide into the affections of the Credulous and Unthinking, that it will be a hard matter to dispossess them of their false Reports. Such Slanders blacken our Governors; but it's to be hop'd they will take care, as much as in them lies, to punish the broachers of 'em. For Slanders may strike the Publick, although the slanderers act in a privy manner. Of such vile men as these, doth Holy *David* complain, *Psal. 57. 4. My soul is among lyons* (says he), *and I lye even among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.* No Weapon (it seems) could hurt *David* more than that

that of the Tongue. A drawn Sword was not more terrible, the biting of a Serpent was not more venomous, than the mouth of his deceitful, slanderous Enemy. And so may every mortal man living say as well as *David*. For what greater Mischiefs and viler Machinations have been wrought, than those which have been occasion'd by the Tongue? We may say of our Slanderers as *St. Paul* speaks of his factious *Corinthians*; and our Governours must inflict their Censures and Penalties upon these outrageous, yet sly People, *lest there be amongst us, debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults*, 2 Cor. 12. 20.

This Sin has been practis'd amongst us to the utter Subversion both of Church and State. And how soon the swoln Tide may return again, none can tell, but he alone *who is Lord and King, be the people never so impatient, and sitteth between the Cherubims, be the earth never so unquiet*, Psal. 99. 1. So highly doth Slander vaunt it self, that it daily strikes at our Governours in their different stations. Through this the Church is daily wounded and her Priests abus'd, and not by those only who are her profess'd
Ene-

Enemies, but by those who Eat of her Bread too. No wonder then that Religion sits so hovering and tottering, and threatens to take her flight, since she is so meanly, or rather, maliciously treated by her Votaries. The Proud, the Ambitious, the Covetous, the Voluptuous, have all had such cursed flings at her, that it is greatly to be fear'd, that God will send his Judgments upon us, as he did upon the *Israelites* heretofore for their Idolatry, Ezek. 6. *and bring a sword upon us, and destroy our high-places, and make our Altars desolate.* If Holy Mother doth suffer through the Calumnies of rancorous, lying Men, no wonder that her Sons are but homely treated. But there is one peculiar hindrance of Peace amongst us, which I can't forbear hinting at, and that is a good Word so often and yet so vilely misapplied, to wit, Moderation. We are apt to strain this word too far, and by that to put our misconstructions upon't. Hence a man now can't be Zealous and hearty in a good Cause of God and the Church, but he must be vilify'd with the opprobrious Language of a hot-headed Man, a fiery Zealot, a wrangling Bigot, even by those sort of men too, who by their unwarrantable Zeal

Zeal have put both Church and State into a Combustion heretofore; and would again, it's to be fear'd, did but their Power equalize the venom of their Tongues.

But, methinks, they who cry up Moderation so much, don't shew fair play. For since the King has Bless'd his People with a Toleration, it is the business of every one to make the best on't. Let every one aim, as much as in him lies, to keep to that Religion which he in his Conscience doth profess, and let him not trespass upon his Neighbour by any railing Accusation, or contumelious Language. Toleration (if I have any Notion of the Word) permits me to enjoy my own way of Worship in Peace and Quiet, but not to calumniate others who will not comply with mine. If I'm a Separatist, and can't in Conscience comply with the Liturgy of the Church of *England* as now by Law establish'd, I'll keep to my separate Meeting, whatever it be, and not herd my self with those I can't communicate with. For this would be, in effect, to tell the World I'm of no Religion, whilst I profess the Church of *England*, and yet a Separation from Her. This is nonsense upon a Principle of Reason, and what is so, I'm sure will never be

be Sense upon a Principle of Religion. 'Tis Hypocrisy to the utmost degree; nay, it's Hypocrisy in that which is of the grandest moment to us, and by which we must stand or fall at the last day. But this is Moderation abus'd, and is but a cleaner word for Trimming and Time-serving. But however disaffected People will dare to vilify the Church of *England*, let 'em have a care how they abuse even their beloved Toleration. For whatever be the Gifts and Dispensations of the Holy Ghost, I am certain a slandering Tongue proceeds from a quite different Spirit than that of God. And if moderate men have shew'd so little Mercy to the Church and her Children, sure Atheists and Latitudinarians will not prove better natur'd. And they that will dare to bely Religion at the Bulk will not be afraid to vilify the Professors of it. Now from Church let us turn to Civil Affairs, and see if the slandering Tongue doth not throw its Venom here too, and work its utmost to disturb Civil Government. Let us look narrowly into the cause of Civil Dissentions, and we shall find they owe their Rise to this Vice of the Tongue. We shall find that disaffection and disloyalty towards our Governors,

vernors, is upheld by nothing so much as in mens opening their Mouths against 'em by their backbitings, whisperings and surmisings, either by false News and Reports, or by malicious Forgeries, or mutinous Repinings, by which they endeavour to draw the hearts of the People from their Governours, in order to kindle a Combustion in the State.

But they who are for raising Calumnies against Church and State, no wonder we find 'em striking at those two glorious Bodies which are the Supports of both, I mean our Universities. They who set Learning at nought, will be sure to depreciate those who profess it. But those sort of Creatures, as rancorous as they are, are not their worst Enemies; for they are such Idiots as well as Slanderers, that to regard what they say, would be giving that honour to their Persons which they never did deserve, and never was their due. But the Universities have viler Enemies to complain of, I mean the ungrateful of their own Bodies. Even they who have been foster'd in their Bosoms have lifted up their heels against 'em. They who have had their Livelihood and their Education from 'em, have sometimes been most inveterate and implacable
against

against 'em. Such ungrateful Pick-thanks have done 'em more Dishonour, than any others their open Enemies whatsoever. They have reproach'd 'em in downright Terms, or they have spoke so meanly and slightingly, that any one may see what they would be at.

Hence, I do think, are raised those evil Reports of some worthy Governours and other Members of the same. But ill-natur'd Buffoons value no ones Reputation. If they can creep from house to house, and find entertainment from some Gentlemen for their Lyes and false Stories of their own Bodies, they are in their Element. If they can ingratiate themselves into their favour, so far as to find an entertainment of Debauchery for another of Falsities, they are happy in their own Eyes, though they do but expose themselves in a double Sense. So that if the Gentlemen be University Haters, or despisers of Learning and good Manners, such Creatures have the knack to humour 'em.

And I know none so great Sycophants as these (whether they be Ecclesiasticks or Laicks it matters not, for there are of each sort) unless those Gentlemen who Countenance, Entertain and Encourage 'em, as it is too often seen, to their unspeakable

speakable shame and ignominy. But it's the business of every one who has respect to Conscience, to discourage the Slanderer by all the lawful means that possibly he can use. I think I need not explain the phrase of being cut off, in this place, since it is apparent, that by the words of the Text, *David* speaks of *privy slandering*: Of those who traduce one another upon the account of Envy or Ill-Will, or upon prospect of some Honour or Preferment, by the ruin of a Brother, or merely upon the account of the pleasure of doing Mischiefe. But whatever induceth any one thus to vilify, let him be animadverted upon, let him be Excommunicated the society of Men, nay the Church it self, if he obstinately persists in this his Rascality. Had this privy slandering been punishable by Death among the *Jews*, we might have thought the words of the Text to have extended so far. But we don't find by any Writer that this Crime was made a capital Offence by 'em. 'Tis true, we read of the *lex talionis*, in the case of one sort of Slandering, as well as in that of any other Misdemeaner. But then, it was slandering in a more heinous, solemn Manner.

For

For instance : If a Man will come before a Magistrate and swear falsely against his Neighbour, to the prejudice, damage, or to the ruin of him, and the Person so swearing was found guilty of the Falshood, why then, whatever was the Crime he had laid to the charge of his Innocent Neighbour, the false Swearer was, *in propria sua Personâ*, to retaliate. If he had swore Murder against a man, and the Person so sworn against could prove himself innocent of the said Crime laid to his charge, in open Court, then was the Accuser to make satisfaction for the Offence committed against his Brother, with the loss even of his own Life. If he falsely accus'd him of Theft or Extortion, he was to make restitution Four-fold of what he had alledg'd against him. For the *Jews* were very rigid and exact in their Judicial Law, and peculiarly in this most solemn, and consequently most heinous way of slandering a Neighbour by Forswearing themselves. But whatever were the Punishment due to Slanderers among the *Jews*, I shall not account for here, since to

be cut off, as it respects privy slandering, may be explain'd by some other Coercion or Animadversion than that of Death. The Phrase (as spoke by *David*) is rendred by some Commentators, to signify turning out of Place, or Office, or Family. *Occultos Detractores & Sufurrones, hominum genus pestilentissimum, è domo & aulà exterminabo.* A Calumniator should be remov'd from Civil Society. So then, to apply the words of *David* to our selves, we may, I think, put this Construction upon 'em, (*viz.*) Whosoever privily slandereth his Neighbour, let him know that he is a common Nufance, Pest, and Enemy to Mankind. For he that by a long, inveterate Malice will undermine one man in his good Name, will ruin another, and another, and so on, *ad infinitum*; as his Malice and Ill-Nature shall prompt him to it. Therefore when once the Slanderer is found out (as God be thank'd he generally is) it is the business of every wise, sober and honest Man to stand upon his Guard against him. Whatever he says, let no one rely upon. If he swears the thing is true
which

which he is relating, take it for granted that he is the greater Villain; and instead of gaining belief, doth but add one sin to another, *viz.* that of Swearing, to the other of Lying; an argument that he is conscious to himself of his own crack'd Credit, and is as weak as impious, by thinking that others will believe him for swearing rashly, who without any scruple of Conscience shall lye with foresight and consideration. Whenever it is a man's misfortune to happen in such an ones Company, let him turn a deaf ear to his rascally Tales; and if he would vent his Forgeries without Controul, let him take care to herd with those Beasts of Prey who are like himself, and let him not interlope upon good Society, as sometimes he doth, to his great infamy. It is the business of every one to discourage all such Men; to discountenance 'em wherever they be, in their filthy Way, which may serve as as Brand, a Stigma upon 'em, for others to know 'em by. For if a man hears his Neighbour traduc'd, and he can disprove the Lyar, it is his Duty, as he bears

the same Humane Nature with him, to vindicate him in his absence, and to inform the Person of the wrong done unto him, and the Person who did it too. And this he may do without being a Pimp or a Sneakby for his pains. He is so far from being such by doing so, that he acts like a man of Honour and Honesty; and he is to be deem'd no better than a Slanderer, that doth not inform the Person whom he knows or imagines to be vilify'd, if it lies in his power.

For as a Man values his own Reputation, so he ought to respect that of his Neighbour's too; which respect he will shew, by vindicating his Neighbour's Credit, whenever he finds it mall'd and mangl'd by impious Slanderers. I'll defend him from the Slanderer as much as I would from a Thief, an Extortioner, a Ruffian, or any other Villain that would do violence to his Body or his Estate. And this I'm oblig'd to by the very Law of Nature, as well as that of the Gospel. I'm sure that man who is really tender of his own Credit, can't hear others

others abus'd, without a great deal of regret and irksomness to himself. Had we but common Pity for our own Kind, methinks we should unanimously joyn to prosecute those who are Enemies to it, and the worst Enemies too, to wit, privy Slanderers. For how knowest thou, O Man! that hearest a Sycophant belying his Neighbour, but that it may be thy turn next to be traduc'd by him, whenever the pitiful, malicious Humour shall seize him? Not to animadvert then upon such an one, is to injure the Innocent. Therefore let him have correction either by Exhortation or Reproof between thee and him; and if he will not be won with the Admonition, let him by way of publick Charity, be promulg'd as a Falsificator and a Lyar; and if this will not shame him into better Manners, bring him to condign Punishment, as is provided for such pestilentious Malecontents as he, by the positive Laws of our Land. For where there is sufficient proof against a Slanderer, our Laws do allow of Reparation, and Satisfaction to be made by him to the

Slandered Person. He must satisfy either by way of Fund, or Recantation in publick Judicature, for the damage done to his poor Neighbour by his false Tongue. Nay further, though for Slandering he runs not the risque of losing his Life, yet in some cases he lies obnoxious to lose his Ears, as in the particular case of Petit-Treason. But it's not my business here to determine what are the Punishments to be inflicted for Slandering, in its different degree or proportion; whether it be that of slandering the King, or a Peer of the Realm, or any other private Neighbour; but I'm to exhort every one to stand upon his Guard as well as he can, against such ravenous Men; by vindicating and asserting the Right and Priviledge of his Neighbour, as well as that of himself, against them, for the better and firmer establishment of Peace and Quiet of Societies. Sure we may well apply that Text of the Wise Man in his *Proverbs*, Chap. 25. v. 23. against the Slanderer. He says, *The north wind drives away rain: so doth an angry countenance a backbiting tongue.* The Lord

Lord Bishop of *Ely* paraphraseth it thus: As the sharpness of the North Wind scatters Clouds and drives away Rain, so a severe Countenance, full of indignation against him that traducth his Neighbour secretly, not only gives a check, but puts a stop to his slanderous Tongue: which would not tell such Lies, if they were not greedily receiv'd. But in his Argum. *b.* before this Chapter, He says, that he must not omit neither, that the 23^d verse will admit of a quite contrary sense to that in our Translation; and is by some rendred thus: As the North Wind begetteth Rain (for so it doth in some Climates) so a backbiting Tongue raiseth up Anger and Indignation (which appear in the Countenance both of him that believes the Calumny, and of him that is calumniated, when he knows how he is abus'd.) Thus that Reverend Prelate. Let every one then shew his Anger (for you know we may *be angry and sin not*) against such a Criminal, that is still privily lurking (in this sense) to murder the Innocent; for his mouth is big with Fraud and

Deceit, and under his Tongue is Mischief and Vanity.

For it is not the balm of a gentle Exhortation, but the sharp discipline of Coercion, that must search this disease of the Tongue, and heal it too. Let our Governours, Spiritual and Temporal, lend us their lifting hands to stop this poisonous Contagion; let the Laws of God and Man be applied as a soveregin remedy to this Universal Sore, lest the whole Body and Community of Christians be over-run and born down with this deadly Evil.

Our Book of Homilies says, in a Sermon against Contention, that many times there cometh less hurt of a Thief, than of a railing Tongue: For the one taketh away a man's good Name, the other taketh but his Riches, which are of much less value and estimation than his good Name. And a Thief hurteth but him from whom he stealeth, but he that hath an Evil Tongue, troubleth all the Town where he dwelleth, and sometimes the whole Country. And a railing Tongue is a Pestilence so full of Contagiousness, that St. Paul willeth
Christian

Christian Men to forbear the Company of such, and neither to eat nor drink with them, 1 Cor. 5. The Homily (in this first part of it) is an Admonition against railing and brawling, and evil-speaking; under which may very well be comprehended Slandering and Backbiting. For Calumniators are generally contentious, railers, scolders and brawlers. I advise therefore every individual backbiting Pick-thank, to have recourse to this good Homily of the Church, and peruse it; and (as much as he despises Homilies, and is above 'em) let him be pleas'd to bridle his Tongue from evil-speaking, lying and slandering, till he is able to make a better discourse, and more edifying for all Capacities, than this is; and I don't know but that of all the sins which have crept into the World since the Fall of man, this of Slandering would be the greatest stranger amongst us. But if Homilies and other wholesome Instructions don't restrain these Town and Country Disturbers, such as are privy Slanderers, we must deliver them over to the hands of Justice; or they must
take

take their chance of seeing the slandered be their own Revengers. Nay, I think, if they who are abus'd by Calumny, be as maliciously and as devilishly inclin'd as their Calumniators, they would be too apt to be their own Carvers.

For why, (says he that is traduc'd) if the natural Law of Conscience, nor the Laws of God, nor yet those of the Land, don't curb my Neighbour's Tongue, how may they be thought to tie my hands? If one man stabs me in my Reputation, why may not I stab him to the Heart? For Life is but a Carcass without it, and the worst of Deaths is to live without a good Name. Therefore Slanderers, even in this sense, run the risque of being cut off. For though the Laws of God and Man do forbid us to be our own Revengers, yet if we will break through these great bounds, how will our Traducers help themselves? for we do no more than they: They trespass against God and Man, and so we do. And are not our Swords, and Daggers, and Pistols, our own in this sense, as much as their Tongues?

Tongues? Who is Lord over us so far as to controul us, or prevail against us? But this is a profane, ranting, Latitudinarian sort of Arguing. For Murder, without all peradventure, is a more heinous crime than that of Calumny, in respect of the Patient, whatever Huffs and Swaggerers may prate. For the Slanderer, purely by taking away my Reputation, though deem'd by me dearer than my Life, in the main doth me no hurt: that is, he injures me not in respect of my grand Concern in the other Life. But if a Man murders his Calumniator out of private revenge, he makes him run the risque (especially if his death be sudden) of his Soul for ever, by sending him out of the World before his time, and in the very act, perhaps, as well as habit, of Lying and Slandering. Now it's possible, the Traducer might have repented of this his Villainy, had he not been prevented by Murder. So that in respect of the Patient who suffers, there can be no comparison between the two sins of Slandering and Murder. But yet this doth not

at all excuse the Slanderer, but only serves to forewarn him of the danger he lies under from the vindictive slandered, although he should have the good Luck to escape the punishments of the National Laws.

And to the Innocent Person that is traduc'd by impious and filthy Tongues, I shall give Advice in the words of that unknown, but incomparably learned Author, in his Remarks on Sir Roger L'Estrange's Edition of *Æsop's Fables*, Fab. 332. His words are these: What other Men say of us (said that Eloquent Greek Father, *Nazianzen*) is nothing else but what other men dream of us. If (said a Philosopher) I had all mens Tongues in my possession, they should say no more than I pleas'd; but since God and Nature have given every man a Tongue to talk at random; let them say what they will, I will do what I think just and fit: it being simply impossible to please all Men, (yea the Almighty himself cannot do it, till first he make all Men good); and usually he who endeavours to please the most, displeaseth the best, even
God

God and his own Conscience ; but if a man have these two great Witnesses for him, he may easily commence a process of Exculpation against all the World ; for which we have the sage Counsel of two Heathen Poets,

Ne Te quæstiveris extra, (said one of them. And the other)

————— *Hic Murus abeneus esto,*
Nil conscire tibi, nullà pallefcere Culpâ.

It's as evident a matter of fact, as Sacred and Human History can make it, that the best of Patriarchs and Kings, the most eminent Prophets and Apostles, and the greatest Luminaries of the Primitive Church, have had their good Names sullied with the rank Breaths of the wicked ; yet never any of them broke their hearts for Calumny and Reproach ; and good reason for their generous Patience, *for the servant is not greater than his Lord* ; and I desire (says this learned Author) any to find in Church History, that such vile Aspersions were thrown upon *Narcissus, Eustathius, Athanasius, St. Basil, Gregory Nazianzen,*
St.

St. Cyprian, St. Hierom, and St. Augustine, (though all of them were most basely traduc'd) as were cast upon Innocency it self: So that the good Christian who is too much concerned for being tossed so frequently upon the raging billows of Slander, hath this to solace him, that he is embarked on that tempestuous Sea with very good Company. God grant that every innocent Person slandered, who may read these or such like wholesome words, may ruminate so far upon 'em, as to lay them up in his heart, and benefit himself thereby, to his Peace and Quiet here, and to his Eternal Glory hereafter.

Now to God the Father, to God the Son, to God the Holy Ghost, three Persons and one God, be all Honour and Glory for ever and ever. Amen.



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